the weekly Standard

SEPTEMBER 17, 2007 $3.95

JEW-HATRED AND JIHAD
MATTHIAS KÜNTZEL

The Infantilization of Corporate America

MATT LABASH

GERARD BAKER
FRED BARNES
STEPHEN F. HAYES
on the campaign trail

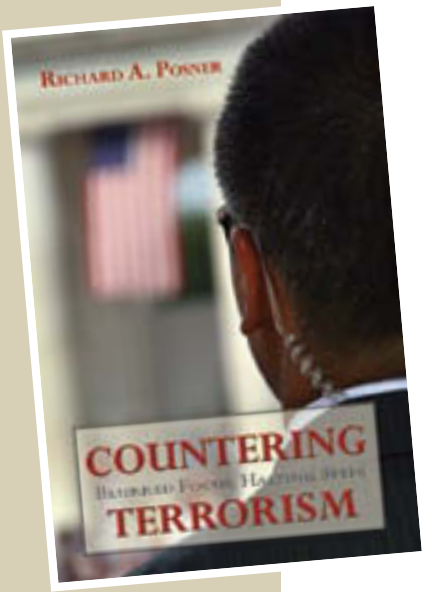
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

© 2007 Visa U.S.A. Inc. *Source: "Wells Fargo Case Study: Early Intervention Education: Empowering the Wise Use of Credit," 2004-2007.
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A little education can prevent a lot of debt.

There's no denying that too many Americans struggle with debt. Young people are particularly vulnerable, especially to predatory lending tactics. And we at Visa feel that we have a responsibility to help bring about a solution. So we are attacking this problem at its root by bringing financial literacy education into America's classrooms. It's through our innovative Practical Money Skills for Life program. Participating students incur up to 42% fewer over-limit charges and keep a revolving balance that's up to 26% lower than students who haven't taken these courses.* At Visa, we believe that well-educated kids make smarter choices. After all, students should graduate with a diploma, not a mountain of debt. There's more behind the card than you think. Educate yourself at **www.behindthecard.com**

FROM HOOVER STUDIES IN POLITICS, ECONOMICS, AND SOCIETY SERIES



Countering Terrorism

Blurred Focus, Halting Steps

RICHARD A. POSNER

"As Judge Posner's book ably demonstrates, reform of the U.S. intelligence community has a long way to go, notwithstanding the recent Intelligence Reform Act passed into law by the Congress. His analysis of 'three cultures" and the problems of domestic intelligence are especially outstanding."

—William E. Odom, Lieutenant General, U.S. Army (Ret.)

In this third book of a series on intelligence reform, Judge Richard A. Posner evaluates the measures that have been taken in the last two years to implement the Intelligence Reform Act of 2004, which decreed a wholesale reorganization of the intelligence system. *Countering Terrorism* also addresses broader issues in the struggle against terrorism, such as the failure of criminal law enforcement and the difficulty of devising criteria for allocating counterterrorist funds. Although some successes have been achieved in the effort to make our intelligence system more coherent and effective, notably with respect to intelligence analysis and "open source" intelligence, progress overall has been slow, owing in major part to the deflection of senior officials in the intelligence community from overall supervision and coordination to short-term crisis management. Of particular concern, domestic intelligence remains in serious disarray, dangerously exposing the nation to the emergent threat of homegrown, as distinct from foreign-initiated, terrorism.

Countering Terrorism is copublished with Rowman & Littlefield.

Richard A. Posner is a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals in Chicago and a senior lecturer at the University of Chicago Law School. He is the author of hundreds of articles and dozens of books, including *Uncertain Shield: The U.S. Intelligence System in the Throes of Reform* (2006) and *Preventing Surprise Attacks: Intelligence Reform in the Wake of 9/11* (2005).

Rowman & Littlefield Publishers
Distributed by National Book Network
September 2007, 260 pages
ISBN: 978-0-7425-5883-0
$22.95, Cloth

Hoover Studies editors Peter Berkowitz and Tod Lindberg

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

To order, call 800.462.6420 or visit rowmanlittlefield.com.

HOOVER INSTITUTION

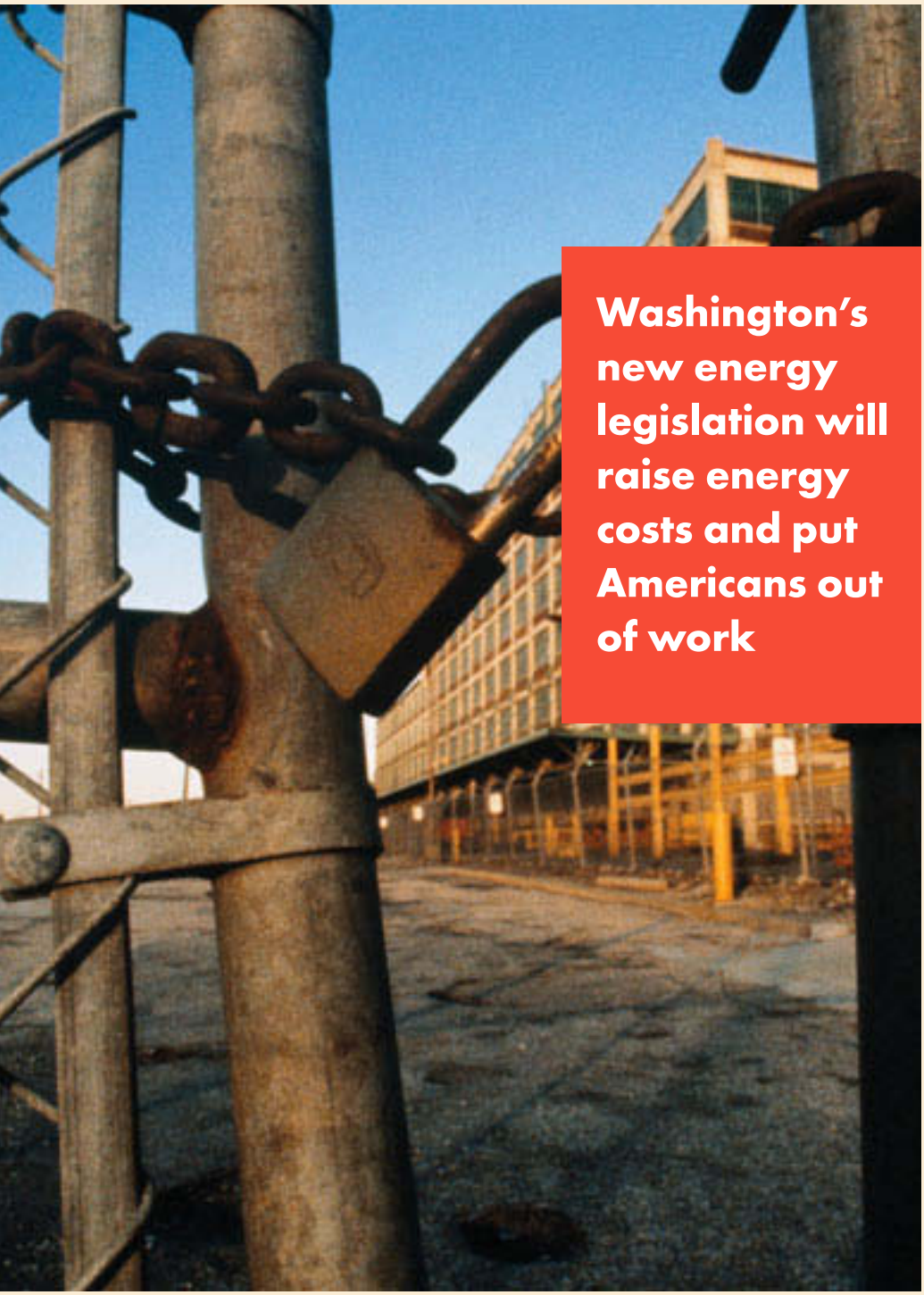
. . . ideas defining a free society

STANFORD UNIVERSITY, Stanford California 94305-6010 Toll-free: 877.466.8374 Fax: 650.723.1687 info@hoover.stanford.edu www.hoover.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Can America's economy afford Congress' ~~energy~~ bill?

Layoffs, new taxes and cost spikes



Washington's new energy legislation will raise energy costs and put Americans out of work

Congress will soon consider sweeping new energy legislation that will raise energy taxes, cost American jobs and further limit the nation's access to domestic energy supplies.

The legislation's energy tax hikes and gasoline price controls will raise energy costs for American consumers, manufacturers and businesses – hurting economic growth and driving high-paying American jobs overseas. The legislation even reduces our ability to increase domestic oil and natural gas reserves here at home – increasing reliance on foreign sources of energy.

We need energy policies that support American jobs and increase supplies of energy from all sources to meet future generations' demand. Congress should reject these provisions of the energy bill and get to work on legislation to secure our energy future.

Reject Congress' Energy Bill

NAM National Association of Manufacturers

U.S. Chamber of Commerce

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Contents

September 17, 2007 • Volume 13, Number 1

2 Scrapbook . . . . . *9/11 fatigue, Luciano Pavarotti, etc.*

7 Editorial . . . . . *Enter the Triangulators*

4 Casual . . . . . *Tod Lindberg, clean freak.*

Articles

8 The McCain Surge *It's bearing fruit in New Hampshire.* . . . . . BY STEPHEN F. HAYES

12 The Dangers of Deadlines *Let conditions on the ground dictate troop levels, not politics.* . . . . . BY KIMBERLY KAGAN

14 And They're Really Off . . . *Fred's in, John's fighting, Rudy's ahead, and Mitt's got ready cash.* . . . . . BY FRED BARNES

15 So Many Reporters, So Few Voters *With Fred Thompson at a typical Iowa campaign event.* . . . . . BY GERARD BAKER

16 The CIA Examines Itself *The results aren't pretty.* . . . . . BY GABRIEL SCHOENFELD

18 The Sunni Side of the Street *A hopeful gathering in Ramadi.* . . . . . BY MARIO LOYOLA

Cover: The Fun Dept.'s Mark Doughty (left), Jayla Boire, Nick Gianoulis, and Dave Raymond. Photo by Lev Nisnevitch

Features

20 Are We Having Fun Yet?
The infantilization of corporate America. . . . . . BY MATT LABASH

30 Jew-Hatred and Jihad
The Nazi roots of the 9/11 attack. . . . . . BY MATTHIAS KÜNTZEL

Books & Arts

35 The Grass File *SS veteran, Nobel laureate, America hater.* . . . . . BY JEFFREY GEDMIN

36 Lost Leader *How Tom Daschle set the stage for his own defeat.* . . . . . BY JOSEPH BOTTUM

38 Woman of Letters *Can Willa Cather be saved from her academic admirers?* . . . . . BY JAMES SEATON

42 In the Trenches *A descent into Kansas City's National World War I Museum.* . . . . . BY ANDREW FERGUSON

44 O Newfoundland *The province where Edward Hopper's paintings come alive.* . . . . . BY ROBERT WHITCOMB

45 William Deedes, 1913-2007 *With his death, a species of journalist is extinct.* . . . . . BY ALEXANDER CHANCELLOR

46 She'll Take Manhattan *Who would have thought we'd yearn for Charles Bronson?* . . . . . BY JOHN PODHORETZ

48 Parody . . . . . *Fred Thompson's scheduling conflicts.*

William Kristol, *Editor* **Fred Barnes,** *Executive Editor*
Richard Starr, *Deputy Editor* **Claudia Anderson,** *Managing Editor*
Christopher Caldwell, Andrew Ferguson, Robert Messenger, *Senior Editors* **Philip Terzian,** *Literary Editor*
Stephen F. Hayes, Matt Labash, *Senior Writers* **Victorino Matus,** *Assistant Managing Editor*
Matthew Continetti, *Associate Editor* **Jonathan V. Last,** *Staff Writer* **Michael Goldfarb,** *Online Editor*
Sonny Bunch, *Assistant Editor* **Duncan Currie,** *Reporter*
John McCormack, Samantha Sault, *Editorial Assistants*
Philip Chalk, *Design Director* **Lev Nisnevitch,** *Photography Director*
Catherine Lowe, *Marketing Director* **Mairead Cagney,** *Accounting Manager*
Taybor Cook, *Office Manager* **Carolyn Wimmer,** *Executive Assistant* **Andrew Kaumeier,** *Staff Assistant*
Gerard Baker, Max Boot, Joseph Bottum, Tucker Carlson, John J. DiIulio Jr., Noemie Emery, Joseph Epstein, David Frum, David Gelernter, Reuel Marc Gerecht, Brit Hume, Frederick W. Kagan, Robert Kagan, Charles Krauthammer, Tod Lindberg, P. J. O'Rourke, John Podhoretz, Irwin M. Stelzer, *Contributing Editors*
Terry Eastland, *Publisher*

the weekly Standard

The Weekly Standard (ISSN 1083-3013), a division of News America Incorporated, is published weekly (except the first week in January, third week in April, second week in July, and fourth week in August) at 1150 17th St., NW, Suite 505, Washington D.C. 20036. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 50108, Boulder, CO 80322-0108. For subscription customer service in the United States, call 1-800-274-7293. For new subscription orders, please call 1-800-283-2014. Subscribers: Please send new subscription orders and changes of address to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 50108, Boulder, CO 80322-0108. Please include your latest magazine mailing label. Allow 3 to 5 weeks for arrival of first copy and address changes. Canadian/foreign orders require additional postage and must be paid in full prior to commencement of service. Canadian/foreign subscribers may call 1-902-563-4723 for subscription inquiries. American Express, Visa/MasterCard payments accepted. Cover price, $3.95. Back issues, $3.95 (includes postage and handling). Send letters to the editor to The Weekly Standard, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Suite 505, Washington, DC 20036-4617. For a copy of The Weekly Standard Privacy Policy, visit www.weeklystandard.com or write to Customer Service, The Weekly Standard, 1150 17th St., NW, Suite 505, Washington, D.C. 20036. Copyright 2007, News America Incorporated. All rights reserved. No material in The Weekly Standard may be reprinted without permission of the copyright owner. The Weekly Standard is a registered trademark of News America Incorporated.

BPA INTERNATIONAL

www.weeklystandard.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

New York Times Fatigue

"Again it comes, for the sixth time now—2,191 days after that awful morning—falling for the first time on a Tuesday, the same day of the week." Thus began a front-page, 1,664-word article by N.R. Kleinfeld in last Sunday's *New York Times* headlined, "As 9/11 Draws Near, a Debate Rises: How Much Tribute Is Enough?"

For mental health reasons, The Scrapbook tends to avoid reading all 1,664 words of portentous thumbsuckers in the *Times*. Fortunately, the nut-graf of this one was right near the top: "Each year, murmuring about Sept. 11 fatigue arises, a weariness of reliving a day that everyone wishes had never happened. It began before the first anniversary of the terrorist attack. By now, though, many people feel that the collective commemorations, publicly staged, are excessive and vacant, even annoying."

Is this true? Is there really a debate about 9/11 ceremonies outside the pages of the *New York Times*? Are Americans really suffering from "9/11 fatigue"? Do many Americans find the 9/11 commemorations "annoying"?

The *Times*'s data points consist of four family members who lost relatives on 9/11 (they're divided on the "fatigue" issue), three random individuals (all fatigued), and a few mental health professionals (somewhere between concerned and fatigued, as mental health professionals tend to be).

The first quotation goes to a nursing supervisor from Massachusetts: "I may sound callous, but doesn't grieving have a shelf life? We're very sorry and mournful that people died, but there are living people. Let's wind it down."

Almost all of the individuals quoted focus on 9/11 as a day of loss. One compares it to the Minneapolis bridge collapse, another to a tornado. There's no mention of 9/11 as an attack, or an act of war. And no mention that it was a day of American heroism.

The Scrapbook was reminded that this is not new for the *New York Times*. Already, three years ago, *Times* columnist Thomas Friedman was criticizing the Bush administration for being "addicted to 9/11." Friedman looked forward to the day when September 11 would once again be restored "to its rightful place on the calendar: as the day after Sept. 10th and before Sept. 12th. I do not want it to become a day that defines us. Because ultimately Sept. 11th is about them—the bad guys—not about us. We're about the Fourth of July."

At the time, in October 2004, we commented: "We at The Weekly Standard yield to no one in our loyalty to the Fourth of July. But September 11, 2001, also cannot help but define us 21st-century Americans. And it defines us not simply in terms of those we have to fight, and defeat. For September 11 is not simply about 'the bad guys,' about the attacks on America. September 11 is also about our response. It is about the police and firefighters in New York, the servicemen and women in the Pentagon, and the passengers and crew of United Flight 93. September 11 was a day of infamy. But it was also a day of bravery, and of nobility. And it could go down in history as a day that began an era in which the American people, and their leaders, rose to the challenges before them—an era in which they acted wisely, and steadfastly, and honorably."

And that is why we—and we would hazard to guess most Americans—feel no hesitation in commemorating 9/11, despite the fatigue of the *New York Times*. ♦

Luciano Pavarotti, 1935-2007

The Scrapbook bids a fond farewell to Luciano Pavarotti, whose death last week, at 71, from pancreatic cancer was not a surprise, but still a shock. Pavarotti was not the first celebrity tenor in modern history—that would be Enrico Caruso—but he was the greatest tenor of his time, the best-loved operatic singer, and (to finish out the list of superlatives) arguably the Voice of the Century. His range was beyond compare, the sweetness of his tone was unique, the voice was unmistakable, his versatility stunning. Pavarotti commanded the stage wherever he sang—the Metropolitan Opera, the Hollywood Bowl, the World Cup finals—and his partners ranged from Dame Joan Sutherland to James Brown to the other two-thirds of the televised Three Tenors (Plácido Domingo, José Carreras).

His genius lay, to a certain degree, in his showmanship, and to stand out among the ranks of opera singers is no small feat. Pavarotti was a gigantic figure, as wide as he was tall, and his beard, white handkerchief, playful manner, and voluminous eyebrows hypnotized audiences nearly as much as his famous high Cs. Is there a greater, more vivid, more accomplished, character in performance today? There was only one Pavarotti. ♦

Hsu's on First?

"When Controversy Follows Cash: Some Fundraisers With Legal Issues Slip Through Campaigns' Vetting." So read the curiously generic headline on the front-page of our Labor Day *Washington Post*. Which "campaigns" might that be? You'll never guess.

Sant S. Chatwal, an Indian American businessman, has helped raise hundreds of thousands of dollars for Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton's campaigns,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(Classic Steiner, reprinted from our issue of February 9, 1998)

even as he battled governments on two continents to escape bankruptcy and millions of dollars in tax liens.

Chatwal is the founder of the Bombay Palace chain of Indian restaurants. In 1995 he declared bankruptcy in his native India after defaulting on loans from three different banks. In 1997 he was sued by the FDIC for his role in running a bank, the "First New York Bank for Business," that had gone bust and, according to the government, "resulted in losses to the bank in excess of $12 million." At the time, Chatwal argued he was unable to pay back the cost of his defaulted (American) loans. In September 2000, a few months before settling the FDIC case, he hosted a $500,000 fundraiser for Mrs. Clinton's Senate campaign at his Upper East Side penthouse. In December 2000 he was charged with bank fraud in India. The charges were later dropped. Today Chatwal plans to help raise $5 million for Sen. Clinton's 2008 presidential bid.

The *Post* also mentions good ol' Norman Hsu, the Chinese "textile manufacturer" and Clinton donor (some $23,000) who last week turned himself into California authorities in connection with an outstanding warrant (from 1992!) for his arrest on charges of grand theft. A judge set Hsu's bail at $2 million. Hsu posted that amount and was released until a hearing scheduled for 9 A.M. on September 5. Hsu was a no-show that day. Two days later he was again taken into custody at a Colorado hospital, where he was recovering from an undisclosed malady. Hsu had been on an Amtrak train when he fell ill. No one seems to know where he was going.

Nor does anyone seem to know all the identities of the many donors whose contributions Hsu "bundled" for a total of more than $1 million. According to the *Wall Street Journal*'s John Fund, the Clinton campaign will not disclose the identities of others like the Paw family, whose postman patriarch makes $49,000 a year and lives with his family in a small home in the flight path of San Francisco International Airport. Since 2004, this family of apparently modest means, at the behest of Hsu, has donated more than $250,000 to Democrats including Clinton.

Spokesman Phil Singer told the *Post* that the Clinton campaign vets major donors "through publicly available records." Sure they do. Our guess is the key question asked of big-dollar donors is this: "Did their check bounce?" ♦

Cambridge, People's Republic Of

Princeton student and ROTC cadet Wes Morgan "once came home from preschool nearly in tears after learning that teachers at the school, which served a politically liberal population in Cambridge, Mass., had gone through illustrated books about cars and trucks and torn out the pages showing military vehicles."

—*Washington Post*, Sept. 3, 2007

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Casual

All Washed Up

"In the history of the world, no one has ever washed a rented car." Think about it: Could there be a pithier way of making the point that if you don't own something and have no stake in its long-term future, you're not going to take care of it the same way you would if it was yours? It's suitable both for *New York Times* columns by Tom Friedman (he's quoted it many times, usually attributing it to Harvard's Larry Summers) and for toastmasters the world around (you can find it on the "Stories for Speakers and Writers" blog, where it's sourced to former Microsoft executive John Wood, quoting Harvard Business School Professor Michael Porter).

I got to thinking about it the other day when I got back from the carwash with my rented car.

Alas, I am quite confident from my subsequent research that I will not go down in history as the first person to wash a rental. In fact, there was quite the parade of confessions to rental-car washing, contra this very maxim, on Berkeley economics professor Brad DeLong's blog a few years back. One person was motivated to do so by the £10 fee one company charges if you don't return the car clean. Another wanted to get rid of the evidence that he'd been using the vehicle off-road in violation of the rental agreement.

But the more interesting cases, and I would immodestly include my own, are of those moved to wash a rental not to avoid a penalty but just because it got dirty. Sorry, all you professors, columnists, and toastmasters, but in most cases, indeed the vast majority of cases, a better explanation for why people don't wash rental cars is that the cars don't get very dirty.

After all, rental car companies always wash the cars before they send them out. They don't always achieve showroom standards of detailing, but in general, with regard to cleanliness, the experience of getting into your rental car is about the same as getting into your own car after it comes out of the carwash—if not better (here, I'm thinking of those permanent stains the children left on the backseat).

DARREN GYGI

Now, how long will you be keeping this car? Well, if you are on a business trip and using your American Express corporate card to pay for it, according to a 2005 AMEX report, you had it on average 2.9 days. Avis has reported an average rental length of about 3 and a half days.

I don't know how often you have been moved, three or four days after going to the carwash, to take your own car back to the carwash. But it strikes me that this would be extravagant even for Tony Shalhoub's "Monk" character on USA Network.

Mark Thorsby is executive director of the Chicago-based International Carwash Association. His market research surveys show that, on average, people say they go to the carwash twice in a 30-day period. Two-week vacations are not the norm for car rentals. And besides, Thorsby says, "People think they go to the carwash more frequently than they do." He notes somewhat ruefully that if people really came twice a month, they'd be "lined up around the block 24 hours a day" at his members' outlets.

Thorsby says his association's members have the anecdotal impression their average customer comes to the carwash four to six times a year. So now the problem comes into focus: The real puzzle isn't why you don't wash your rental, but why on earth you would need to.

One answer might be because you've been driving off-road. Another might be that you keep the car long enough for it to get dirty by your usual standards. That's my case, since I spend a couple months a year at the home office in California. In fact, I will offer the hypothesis that deciding on when to take the car to the carwash has a lot more to do with your relative tolerance or intolerance for grunge than with your ownership stake in the vehicle. One intriguing fact, Thorsby says, is that contrary to expectations, there is "no difference in behavior or attitude with owned or leased cars." You take it to the carwash just as often whether you're giving it back to the dealer in 23 months or planning to keep it until it falls apart.

It's not that ownership doesn't ever matter. As I said to the guy at Ducky's Car Wash in Menlo Park while declining his offer of the $29.95 Ducky's Deluxe plus Rain-X treatment in favor of the $14.99 Ducky's Basic Full Service Wash, "It's not my car." But in truth, that was an excuse, because I wouldn't spend $30 for a carwash at home either.

Tod Lindberg

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Energy.

Hydrocarbons, low carbons, or both?

Natural gas One way to lower carbon emissions is to expand the energy menu, with cleaner burning natural gas. In 2006, we invested $1.5 billion to increase natural gas supplies in the U.S., bringing cleaner energy to homes and businesses across the country.

Alternatives We're investing up to $8 billion over ten years in solar, wind, natural gas and hydrogen to provide low carbon electricity. By 2015, we estimate that our business will eliminate CO_2 emissions by 24 million metric tons a year. It's a start.

bp

beyond petroleum®

© 2007 BP Products North America Inc.

bp.com/us

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IT'S 2007, NOT 1977

Congress is playing '70s-style energy politics. What about America's energy future?

The 1970s was a bad decade for fashion, hairstyles and, especially, energy policy.

So why are some in Congress playing '70s-style energy politics, pushing the kind of gasoline price controls and energy tax hikes that led to gasoline shortages, long lines at the pump and increased imports?

These schemes will increase the cost of energy for American consumers and businesses. They'll curtail access to America's plentiful domestic energy resources and restrict advanced energy research.

The U.S. Department of Energy predicts Americans will need 28 percent more energy by 2030. It's time for energy policies that ensure future generations have the energy they'll need at home and on the job.

Tell Congress you oppose new energy taxes and price controls. Because it's time for real energy policies, not old-fashioned energy politics.

THE *people* OF AMERICA'S OIL AND NATURAL GAS INDUSTRY

EnergyTomorrow.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the weekly Standard

Enter the Triangulators

The case for cutting and running from Iraq has become untenable in recent months, not just substantively but politically as well. Polls show that Americans increasingly believe not only that the surge is working, but also that permanent success in Iraq is possible. So the more intelligent opponents of the war have shied away from the explicit defeatism of Senator Harry Reid's statement earlier this year that the war is lost. Instead, Democrats like Senators Carl Levin and Jack Reed are seeking to triangulate between the strategy of General David Petraeus and a complete withdrawal. The armchair generals in the Capitol want to find a course that reduces U.S. forces in Iraq rapidly but that (so they claim) does not assure defeat. Triangulation may be harmless in symbolic matters of domestic politics, but it can be dangerous, even fatal, in war.

The triangulators' strategy? Pull American forces out of active combat operations as soon as possible, reduce the overall American presence dramatically, and leave behind a much smaller force to fight al Qaeda and to train and assist the Iraqi security forces. A force level in the range of 40,000-80,000 American troops is supposed to be sufficient for these tasks. Supporters cite several reports, ranging from that of the Iraq Study Group last December to one this summer from the Center for a New American Strategy (CNAS), as the basis for their new approach.

There are two fundamental flaws in the logic of these proposals: There is no evidence that imposing a timeline for withdrawal will "incentivize" the Iraqi government to make hard choices—and much evidence to the contrary. And there is no evidence that reducing the American "footprint" will reduce violence in Iraq—and much evidence to the contrary.

But the real-world problems of pursuing a politically tempting "middle way" run even deeper. The American Enterprise Institute (AEI) recently conducted an exercise to evaluate the military feasibility of the most detailed and thoughtful middle way strategy—that of CNAS. The CNAS report advocates the removal of American forces from active combat and the rapid drawdown of overall forces in Iraq to 60,000 by January 2009, along with expansion of advisory support for the Iraqi Security Forces and maintenance of a small number of combat units in Iraq to serve as "quick reaction forces." The AEI exercise concluded that the plan simply could not be executed. The margin of failure wasn't close—adding 10,000 or even 20,000 soldiers to the CNAS target wouldn't make it work.

The basic problem is that the Iraqi Security Forces, as the Jones Commission explained last week, are almost entirely dependent on the American military for logistics, artillery and air support, communications, intelligence, and many other key functions. Iraqi soldiers are fighting well and fighting hard, but they can do so only because of the large American presence in Iraq. Not only is there no Iraqi logistics system that could sustain the ISF if we were to draw down dramatically, but there is no American logistics system now designed to support the ISF without the presence of American combat brigades in partnership with Iraqi units. Although the Jones Commission rightly noted that Iraq's ability to sustain its own forces will grow dramatically in the coming 18 months, any rapid drawdown of American forces now would lead almost certainly to the immediate collapse of the Iraqi military.

Moreover, there are now around 25 American and allied combat brigades in Iraq—perhaps 75,000 combat soldiers. The Iraqi army numbers around 150,000. Pulling coalition combat forces out of the front lines would leave a hole half the size of the entire Iraqi army. The capability of that force is growing daily, but who could possibly imagine that it could take responsibility overnight for the fighting and patrolling now conducted by 75,000 American, British, Polish, Georgian, Australian, and other soldiers?

There are many other problems with the middle-way proposals, but the key point is that "middle way" approaches are based on magical thinking, not military reality. They are offered—explicitly in the case of both the CNAS and the Iraq Study Group—not as strategies for prevailing in Iraq, but as ways to achieve "bipartisan consensus" in Washington. As Senator Ken Salazar, who wants to write the ISG strategy into law, said: "There is a general feeling that people would like to pull something together that would have bipartisan support." No doubt. But you can't run a war based on "a general feeling." And you can't win by triangulating. Achieving bipartisan support for a militarily infeasible "middle way" would be simply another way of legislating defeat.

—Frederick W. Kagan, for the Editors

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The McCain Surge

It's bearing fruit in New Hampshire.

BY STEPHEN F. HAYES

Concord, N.H.

Tempers flared as a horde of journalists jostled its way through the headquarters of Granite State Manufacturing last week. "Where are you from?" demanded a cameraman with a shaved head toting an unwieldy television camera on his shoulder. His question was directed at a tanned TV news reporter with Lego hair who kept thrusting his Fox 10 microphone in front of the candidate. "You should tell your cameraman that he's not the only one here! He keeps walking right into my shot!"

It was crowded. There were also two boom microphones, seven television cameras, ten still photographers, and at least a dozen print reporters.

This was not what I expected when I decided to join John McCain for the launch of his fall campaign. For much of the summer, the only stories about McCain's campaign told of its demise and the imminent end of his political career. The conventional wisdom in Washington: He's finished.

McCain has certainly had a difficult few months. His fundraising has been weak, his spending excessive, his campaign staff gutted. He favored Bush-style immigration reform; GOP primary voters do not. And he is the most outspoken proponent of the unpopular Iraq war among the candidates.

One commentator after another has informed us that McCain's support for the war dooms his campaign. Even with positive reports out of Iraq from the unlikeliest sources—Carl Levin? Hillary Clinton?—the prevailing sense is that McCain is playing an unwinnable hand.

McCain thinks they're all wrong, and he's betting his candidacy on it. In appearances across southern New Hampshire last week, he spoke mostly about the war and the need to win it. This week, he will travel through several states with pro-war veterans in what his campaign is calling the "No Surrender Tour."

If this were poker, he'd be all in.

Our first stop in New Hampshire became newsworthy for reasons having nothing to do with Iraq. Two students from Concord High School asked the kind of look-at-me questions that have more to do with impressing their peers than with grilling the candidate. (Reporters never do this.) One wanted to know whether McCain was worried that he was too old to be president and whether he thinks he might get Alzheimer's in office. Snickers everywhere. McCain joked that his son thinks he's old enough to hide his own Easter eggs, then punctuated his comments, with impeccable comic timing: "Thanks for the question, you little jerk!" The students loved it.

A second questioner sought McCain's views on LGBT issues. McCain was confused by the acronym—short for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender—and after a clarification, the senator acknowledged differences of opinion with his interrogator. The student responded angrily. "I came here to see a leader," he said. "I don't." McCain was unfazed. He told the student that such disagreements are "what America is all about," smiled, and moved on.

Later that evening, I rode with McCain to the fire department in Bow, for a town hall meeting. A nondescript white van with two "McCain" stickers affixed to the back windows served as a poor man's Straight Talk Express. The senator's wife, his daughter Meghan, and a longtime family friend were waiting in the van with two staffers when McCain climbed in. After welcoming me to the van, he smiled broadly and gestured to those sharing the ride.

"I'm sorry you have to sit here surrounded by all of these jerks," he said to great laughter.

I reminded him of the exchange at the school and said: "That's the word of the day, isn't it?"

"Oh yeah," he said, as the memory of the morning registered. "Then

Stephen F. Hayes is a senior writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD *and author of* Cheney: The Untold Story of America's Most Powerful and Controversial Vice President.

Advertising Sales

Peter Dunn, *Associate Publisher pdunn@weeklystandard.com; 202-496-3334*

Nicholas H.B. Swezey, *Advertising Director nswezey@weeklystandard.com; 202-496-3355*
Robert Dodd, *Canada Advertising Manager bob@doddmedia.com; 905-885-0664*
Noel Buckley, *Canada Advertising Manager noel@doddmedia.com; 905-684-5085*
Patrick F. Doyle, *West Coast Advertising Manager patrick.doyle@mcginleydoyle.com; 415-777-4383*
Don Eugenio, *Midwest Advertising Manager doneugenio@weeklystandard.com; 312-953-7236*
Amanda Belden, *Account Executive and online sales abelden@weeklystandard.com; 202-496-3350*

For more information, visit ***weeklystandard.com****, click on the* ***About Us*** *button at the top, and select* ***Advertise****.*
For customer service, please call 1-800-274-7293. *For new subscription orders, please call* 1-800-283-2014.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BALLOONS ARE SAVING THOUSANDS OF LIVES. AND THEY CAN SAVE EVEN MORE.

Balloon angioplasty is one of the most common ways to treat the number one killer in America – coronary artery disease. But the procedure could be even more effective if best practices are shared among doctors and hospitals.

One Blue Company created a database so cardiologists could access and share the most effective angioplasty techniques. As a result, operations yielded better outcomes and fewer heart attacks. All this while saving millions of dollars in post-operative complications.

Because of this unique collaboration with doctors, the Harvard Medical School Department of Health Care Policy identified this program as a BlueWorks winner, an innovative program that saves lives and reduces healthcare costs.

See how Blue Plans are collaborating with doctors and hospitals around the country at www.bcbs.com/balloon.

BlueCross BlueShield Association
An Association of Independent Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans

Better knowledge for healthier lives.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

there was that other question about the TB-GYN community," McCain added, drawing laughter from the others in the van, most of whom knew the right acronym.

John McCain is having fun on the campaign trail—more fun than he did last spring when he was one of the frontrunners, and certainly more fun than during the summer of trouble. He is more carefree, more feisty, and more effective. Voters in New Hampshire seemed to notice.

When McCain dropped in unexpectedly at the Capitol Convenience store on Main Street in Concord, owner Mary Hill, a supporter, told him she could tell the difference. "Our friends were saying—old John McCain, he's going down in the polls," she said. "And I knew that's when you were going to start to fight."

McCain was very aggressive at the town hall meeting in Bow. He offered a harsh critique of the Bush administration and its conduct of the war in Iraq, saying the war "was mismanaged for four years" and caused "needless sacrifice." He said that he was "the only one, the only one" of the GOP candidates who "said a word about this failed strategy of Rumsfeld." He warned that his colleagues who want to set a date for withdrawal are in reality "setting a date for surrender." He spoke against Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad and Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who recently declared his intention to fill any power vacuum left by an American departure from the region. These are serious times, McCain told voters, and I am the leader for such times.

McCain manages to communicate these themes without coming across as dour or pessimistic. In Bow, he told so many jokes that his appearance at times felt like a comedy routine. He told his sure-thing joke about the drunken sailor who wrote to say he was offended by comparisons of congressional spending habits and his own. He told a joke about a man who had his credit card stolen and after comparing the thief's spending levels with his wife's decided not to report it to the bank. He answered a question about illegal immigration by saying: "This meeting is concluded."

It was, in the end, a strong performance in the state that gave McCain his signal triumph of the 2000 campaign. One veteran reporter who has covered McCain off and on since that victory told me he was reminded in Bow of the McCain of old. When McCain took questions after the event, a very earnest television reporter asked if he regretted calling the student in Concord a jerk. "You mean the kid who asked me if I was going to get Alzheimer's? Nah. He *was* a little jerk. I'm kidding."

As soon as we boarded the van for the short trip to a local restaurant, McCain checked his Blackberry for the score of the Arizona Diamondbacks game. (It hadn't started yet.) We drove to the Siam Orchid, a Thai restaurant in downtown Concord, and I joined McCain for some dinner.

After we ordered, I read him comments that Hillary Clinton had made earlier in the day promising to begin withdrawing troops on the first day of her presidency. "It's a declaration of surrender," he said. "You know, the funny thing about it too is that at the Veterans of Foreign Wars, her speech said the surge is succeeding. She didn't say the surge *had succeeded*. If she'd said it succeeded, of course then we'd all be calling for withdrawal."

McCain believes the record of the Clinton administration will become a major issue if Hillary is the Democratic nominee. After all, she's decided to campaign in part on the record of her husband's administration. That administration missed several opportunities to kill Osama bin Laden, McCain points out, and we're still paying for those mistakes. "There was the opportunity to bomb the bin Laden camp, and as you know they decided that that was not constitutional. And there were other occasions as well."

Our conversation switched to the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Republicans. "Some of these guys are sort of hedging their bets" on the Iraq surge, he said. "Their advisers are telling them: Look, don't get too closely tied to it because they may be pulling out in April."

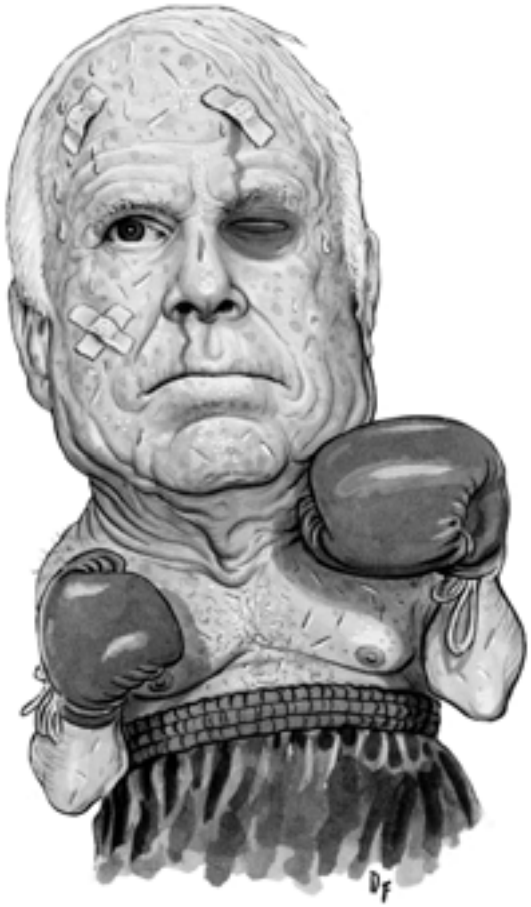
"You care to name names?" I asked.

He paused, thought for a moment, and then got a temporary reprieve when the waiter delivered his dumplings. He offered to share them with his wife. "Have one, my little dumpling," he said before breaking into a fit of fake laughter. "Ho, ho, ho, ho"—an exaggerated knee slap—"Ha, ha, ha. You are my little dumpling."

He turned back to me. "Everybody gets embarrassed by me."

"That was a good way for you to get out of a hard question—start joking with your wife."

But he didn't dodge: "I think it's fair to say that the Romney and Giuliani campaigns have tried to distance themselves from this issue. I think it's pretty obvious." He would try to make it even more obvious at the Republican debate the following evening.



DREW FRIEDMAN

For much of the summer, the only stories about McCain's campaign told of its demise and the imminent end of his political career. The conventional wisdom in Washington: He's finished.

Over the course of the two days in New Hampshire it became clear that McCain is frustrated he doesn't get more credit for pushing the change in Iraq strategy that has resulted in the improvements in the security situation there. He was in fact an early and lonely voice in the Senate pushing for more troops and a better strategy. At the Council on Foreign Relations in November 2003, he called for increasing "the number of forces in-country, including Marines and Special Forces, to conduct offensive operations. I believe we must deploy at least another full division, giving us the necessary manpower to conduct a focused counterinsurgency campaign across the Sunni Triangle that seals off enemy operating areas, conducts search and destroy missions, and holds territory"—an approach strikingly similar to that finally adopted with the surge earlier this year.

Review McCain's speeches and interviews from 2004, 2005, and 2006, and you'll find dozens of similar statements. "I was the only one to criticize Rumsfeld, at some cost," he said at dinner. "You know, people were really critical of me when I was criticizing the strategy and Rumsfeld. Conservative Republicans who now today acknowledge the failure of Rumsfeld were saying I was disloyal."

Since President Bush announced the surge, that criticism has mainly come from Democrats. In January, Senator John Edwards dismissed the surge as "The McCain Doctrine." Says McCain: "I think that I'm beginning to be flattered by Senator Edwards's characterization of the strategy."

McCain no longer regards his position on Iraq as a liability, "because the facts on the ground are better." And as long as that trend continues, he plans to press his advantage on Iraq by calling out Republicans he regards as soft on the surge. He did this at the debate last week in Durham, N.H. When Mitt Romney answered a question about Iraq by qualifying his assessment of the surge—it is "apparently working," Romney said—McCain attacked.

"Governor, the surge is working. The surge is working, sir."

"That's just what I said," Romney protested.

"It *is* working. No, not 'apparently.' It's working," he said.

At dinner the night before, McCain told me this debate would be the most important one yet. Then he won it in decisive fashion, with steady answers that demonstrated the leadership qualities McCain talks about on the campaign trail.

As it happens, that wasn't an accident. Before the debate, Mark Salter, McCain's longtime aide, gave the senator the same advice given young journalists: Show, don't tell. Salter told McCain he should spend less time telling people that he is a strong leader and more time showing them. It worked.

It is far too early to start writing the McCain comeback narrative. But it is equally early to be writing his political epitaph. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Dangers of Deadlines

U.S. soldiers guard the entrance of the Joint Security Station in Baghdad's Yarmuk neighborhood, July 2007.

REUTERS / NIKOLA SOLIC

Let conditions on the ground dictate troop levels, not politics. BY KIMBERLY KAGAN

There is perhaps no greater danger to the success of American efforts in Iraq than the prospect of a congressionally mandated timeline for withdrawal. Depriving commanders on the ground of the ability to make decisions about required force levels dramatically increases the likelihood of losing our recent hard-fought gains. And congressional attempts to legislate a timeline based on the military command's current estimates of its ability responsibly to reduce American forces in Iraq will restrict our ability to respond to unforeseen developments in a complex and rapidly changing situation.

Various members of Congress want to wind down the U.S. military commitment in Iraq. Some are starting to discuss "nonbinding" timelines that express Congress's desire for the military command to reach force-level targets by certain times. Some want to restrict the mission of the remaining troops to counterterrorism and support activities—a return to the reactive posture of 2006, when sectarian violence in Iraq spiked to record levels. All of this would be a huge mistake.

Generals David Petraeus and Raymond Odierno, the U.S. commanders in Iraq, oppose any legislated timeline for drawing down U.S. forces. On September 7, the *New York Times* reported that "even in internal administration deliberations [Petraeus] had described conditions that must be met before a reduction." General Odierno has said repeatedly that any drawdown of American forces must be deliberate, gradual, and based on conditions on the ground. The generals' emphasis on a "conditions-based" drawdown is far from rhetoric. Rather, their support of a "conditions-based" drawdown reflects the sophisticated military concepts underlying the counterinsurgency strategy.

Petraeus, Odierno, and their division commanders have spoken repeatedly of three basic phases in a counterinsurgency: clearing the enemy from safe havens; controlling neighborhoods (assuring that U.S. and Iraqi forces can move through them, but the enemy cannot); and retaining these neighborhoods with Iraqi Security Forces.

"This new plan involves three basic parts: clear, control, and retain," explained General Joseph Fil, commander of Coalition forces in Baghdad, on February 16, 2007. "The first objective within each of the security districts in the Iraqi capital is to clear out extremist elements neighborhood by neighborhood in an effort to protect the population. And after an area is cleared, we're moving to what we call the control operation. Together with our Iraqi counterparts, we'll maintain a full-time presence on the streets, and we'll do this by building and maintaining joint security stations throughout the city."

General Odierno, the commander of Multi-National Corps–Iraq, has already demonstrated the value of deploying units properly to set conditions for successful operations. As new forces arrived in Iraq during the first half of this year, Odierno carefully prepared for "the battle for the belts," the areas around Baghdad where al Qaeda had its safe havens. He deployed two of the new brigades to Baghdad and three to the belts around the city. He divided brigades so that each area had the optimal combination of battalions—light and heavy infantry, cavalry, and artillery. During this deployment, General Odierno began preliminary operations to encircle Baghdad and to establish U.S. forces within the city. He launched

Kimberly Kagan is executive director of the Institute for the Study of War.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a Baghdad-wide offensive, Operation Enforcing the Law, to set the preconditions for clearing enemy sanctuaries there.

These operations set the conditions for Phantom Thunder, the corps offensive that began on June 15—a coherent operation using all of the resources at General Odierno's command. Phantom Thunder cleared al Qaeda from its safe havens in the ring around Baghdad, and from its urban sanctuaries in Dora (within the capital) and Baquba (35 miles to its northeast). General Odierno has followed Phantom Thunder with another corps offensive, Phantom Strike, which has cleared the remnants of al Qaeda from the Diyala River valley, and then forced those remnants into an ever-contracting wedge between the Tigris and Diyala rivers. This same offensive is driving al Qaeda and Shia extremists from areas south of Baghdad.

The flexibility to attack and pursue the enemy is essential to the new counterinsurgency campaign—and it comes from having enough U.S. troops to clear areas, to hold them alongside Iraqi forces, and to combine them properly. These operations are not possible without sufficient troops. Reducing the U.S. presence prematurely, or restricting American forces to their bases, would permit the enemy to reestablish safe-havens from which to begin its own counteroffensive against us and the Iraqi Security Forces.

We've been down this road before. U.S. troops cleared neighborhoods in their 2006 Baghdad offensives. They then rapidly turned them over to Iraqi Security Forces, which were unprepared for the complexity of the urban counterinsurgency fight. Sectarian, militia-affiliated actors within the Iraqi Security Forces, and particularly in the National Police, conducted sectarian cleansing in Sunni neighborhoods. U.S. forces, serving mainly as rapid-reaction forces based on forward operating bases, tried to respond to major crises when the Iraqis called them. But they could not watch over the malign actors within the security forces or help hold on to the gains made by the clearing operations. "The key difference of our ongoing operations is that we are not giving up any of the hard-fought gains," General Odierno explained. "We are staying until the Iraqi Security Forces have the ability to control that battlespace."

Joint Security Stations (JSS) and Combat Outposts (COP) have been the hallmark of the new counterinsurgency campaign in Baghdad, Ramadi, Baquba, and in rural areas. These fortified buildings grouped U.S. and Iraqi troops in Baghdad's neighborhoods and allowed them to spread throughout the city. The JSSs and COPs were also, from the outset of the surge, designed to enable U.S. and Iraqi forces to retain the territory they cleared.

But Joint Security Stations are only one part of General Petraeus's "retain" phase. The surge of forces, and the Sunni rejection of al Qaeda, have presented an opportunity to secure neighborhoods more effectively by creating "concerned citizens groups" and other formations of local volunteers under the auspices of the Iraqi Security Forces. Hitherto, Iraq has relied on nationally and regionally recruited police forces to secure the population. This approach is less effective in a counterinsurgency, however. Local populations have a much better capacity for identifying enemies, and a much greater incentive to secure their neighborhoods from them. So pairing the rapidly growing number of "concerned citizens groups" with Iraqi army and police to defend neighborhoods against terrorists and insurgents is effective. Locally recruited police increase the level of security that the JSSs and COPs can provide, and allow U.S. and Iraqi forces to hold more territory, more securely. But this process takes time, and it proceeds unevenly across Iraq. Only the commanders on the ground can evaluate its progress and prospects in any given area.

U.S. counterinsurgency doctrine, developed under General Petraeus's supervision in 2006, refers to counterinsurgency as a "mosaic war." This metaphor conveys the variations that occur at the local level in an insurgency, likening these variations to the individual tiles of a mosaic. The social fabric of neighborhoods; their leaders; their positions along roads; the buildings that they contain; their ethnic, sectarian, economic, and political composition—all account for significant differences in friendly and enemy behavior at the local level. In other words, in counterinsurgency operations the problems and solutions are different for every neighborhood.

Yet, as in a mosaic, there is also an overall pattern to the problems and solutions. The ability to respond to local variations is vitally important to combat commanders when fighting, when securing the population, or when reducing forces. One must also consider the varying strengths of elements of the Iraqi army. "There's no one solution, a cookie-cutter solution that you can move to immediately" in order to draw down, Odierno said. "We have some areas where Iraqis can take control much faster than other areas. . . . As we build our plan, [the transition will] be slower in some areas, it will be faster in other areas, and that will be based on . . . the security situation in that area as well as the status of Iraqi security forces."

The key point is that there is no "cookie-cutter solution" to reducing American forces in Iraq. Our commanders in Iraq are able to grasp the complexities of an extraordinarily complex problem. They are rightly asking for the flexibility to develop the complex, adaptive solutions that alone can address such a problem. And they deserve that flexibility, just as the soldiers they are commanding deserve to be able to fight the enemy, support the Iraqis with whom they are partnered, and protect themselves without constraints and restrictions imposed upon them for purely political purposes. There is no question that the new U.S. military strategy in Iraq, supported by the increase of forces, has produced remarkable gains on the ground. All of those gains, and America's vital interests in Iraq and in the region, will be threatened if Congress decides to allow political or symbolic considerations to undercut an effective military strategy that is on its way to winning this war. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And They're Really Off . . .

Fred's in, John's fighting, Rudy's ahead, and Mitt's got ready cash. BY FRED BARNES

You didn't see it on TV. Because when Mitt Romney was talking during last week's Republican presidential debate on Fox News, the camera was on him, not John McCain. But McCain was sending a message. He looked at Romney with disdain and rolled his eyes at nearly everything Romney said. The message from McCain was that he's a contender after all for the Republican nomination and ready to take on his opponents vigorously, Romney in particular.

McCain's rise from his political deathbed (as a presidential candidate) was one of two events that reshaped the Republican race as it entered the serious phase, the real campaign, post-Labor Day. The other was Fred Thompson's impressive leap into the contest after having sleepwalked through the I'm-thinking-about-it phase of his candidacy with a series of desultory speeches over the summer. As a full-blown candidate, Thompson was suddenly animated, energized, and appealing.

So here's where the campaign stands with actual voting in Iowa, New Hampshire, and a lot of other places roughly three months away. Based on their chances of winning the nomination, I rank the candidates in this order: (1) Rudy Giuliani, (2) Romney, (3) Thompson, and (4) McCain. The top three are closely bunched, with McCain trailing.

Romney and McCain, Durham, N.H., September 5

GETTY

Let's start with Rudy. He is far and away the best campaigner in the field. His performance in the Fox debate in New Hampshire wasn't his best, but he was still pretty good. He skillfully deflected a tough question that suggested his family values are not as strong as Romney's. Giuliani is twice-divorced and has an uneasy relationship with his two children.

"I think someone's private life, someone's family life, is something that you all look into to determine how are they going to conduct themselves in public office," he responded. "And in my case, you have 30 years, 35 years of experience to figure out how I would." After listing a few of his achievements, Giuliani added: "Any issues in my private life do not affect my public performance."

Giuliani's most important feat has been to defuse the issue of his social liberalism. I'm not sure exactly how he's done it, but he's left the impression that while he's pro-choice, pro-gun control, and pro-gay rights, conservatives need not worry. These are just opinions, not principles he would act on as president. At least that's what he's implied.

Giuliani gets credit for having, as mayor, transformed New York City, a Democratic stronghold. Romney gets far less from having been a Republican governor of a Democratic state, Massachusetts. But he has looks, money, a strong organization, and a set of conservative proposals that are well thought out. He's formidable.

There's something in Romney's political persona that has kept him from gaining national support, but where it really matters—Iowa and New Hampshire, the first states to vote next January—he has double-digit leads over his rivals. His opponents argue this is just because he's run TV ads in those states. That's true—and the ads have obviously worked.

If Romney wins those two states, he'll be difficult to stop. The significant thing is that he'll have enough money to run expensive media campaigns in the subsequent primaries. So Romney shouldn't be underestimated.

Major Garrett of Fox News distinguishes between the two Fred Thompsons. Garrett covered Thompson's first campaign, for the Senate from Tennessee in 1994. There was the "dull and lawyerly Fred" and the "folksy and persuasive Fred." We saw a lot of the dull Fred earlier this year. The folksy and forceful Fred emerged last week after he formally announced his candidacy.

Thompson lost nothing by delaying his announcement and skipping debates. As he told Jay Leno on the night of the New Hampshire debate, "I don't think people are going to say, you know, 'That guy would make a very good president, but he just didn't get in soon enough.'" By the way, three million people watched the debate. Six million saw Thompson on Leno.

The task Thompson faces is not just to convince Republicans he's a "con-

Fred Barnes is executive editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sistent conservative"—that is, unlike Romney who's not consistent and Giuliani who's not conservative. That's easy. Thompson has to make the case to conservatives that, like Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush, he wouldn't knuckle under as president to pressure from the Washington establishment and a hostile media. That's harder. Yet it's the rationale for a Thompson presidency.

McCain doesn't require a rationale. Given his experience and his national security credentials, he *is* the rationale. His support for the war in Iraq and the surge are the essential elements of his appeal. McCain's best moment in the debate was when he zinged Romney for saying the surge is "apparently" working.

"Governor," McCain said, "the surge is working. The surge is working, sir."

"That's just what I said," Romney replied.

"It *is* working," McCain said. "No, not 'apparently.' It's working."

McCain has a problem. If he had set out in the last few years purposely to alienate every Republican in the land, he couldn't have done a better job than he actually has without trying. To put it mildly, he has a lot of Republican animosity to overcome. For McCain to win the nomination, a multitude of Republicans will have to change their mind about him. It's possible, but hardly likely.

Why doesn't Mike Huckabee belong among the top candidates? He's likable and funny, but he has the fatal flaw of being the press's favorite. Remember Bruce Babbitt? John Anderson? They suffered this fate. Reporters operate under the illusion that because they covered the Iowa straw poll, it and Huckabee's second-place finish mattered. Wrong.

I haven't a clue as to who will win the nomination. But whoever does had better get over the notion that Hillary Clinton, in the likelihood she's the Democratic nominee, will unite Republicans and propel them to victory. She'll help, but it will take much more to rally despondent and divided Republicans. Much, much more. ♦

So Many Reporters, So Few Voters

With Fred Thompson at a typical Iowa campaign event. BY GERARD BAKER

Des Moines

If ever you wanted a true-to-life demonstration of the steadily rising tyranny of media hype over real-world substance, you could hardly beat the scene at the Polk County Convention Center last Thursday afternoon.

There we were, centurions in the ever-expanding legions of the world's chattering armies: reporters, TV pundits, commentators, and bloggers, awaiting the most anticipated event of the Republican presidential campaign so far. Fred Dalton Thompson, lawyer, movie actor, senator, actor again, and now the putative savior of a wounded Republican party, was at long last really, honestly, this-time-it's-actually-happening, no-turning-back, going to launch in person his bid for the party's 2008 presidential nomination.

It's customary to see media crowds at these kinds of events—the familiar, powder-puffed TV face, the battle-hardened campaign veteran, and the obligatory Japanese television crew. But there is usually some sense of proportion—a rough ratio of ordinary people to media that grounds the occasion in reality.

But this was different. Actual, interested Iowa voters were thin on the ground. One grizzled presidential campaign reporter, asked to describe the size of the crowd, muttered simply, "Small." Some of us counted maybe 200, though many of them looked suspiciously like campaign staff. And there were at least that many media people.

Usually at these events, before and after the candidate has done his stuff, each reporter will find two or three regular people to talk to who will handily convey the impression of the Real Voter. But on this occasion the crush was so frantic that it sometimes looked like three reporters to each Real Voter.

At one point a nice young woman from the AP came up and asked me what I thought of the senator. I briefly considered hiding my notebook and angrily denouncing Mr. Thompson's opposition to ethanol subsidies, but professional courtesy got the better of me and I revealed my press badge.

Given the expectations surrounding Thompson's candidacy, this formal entry into the presidential campaign waters was a disappointing event.

It was certainly not up to the cleverly choreographed, coast-to-coast media blitz of the night before, when Thompson craftily book-ended the evening's TV, stealing the show in advance of the Fox News candidates' debate in New Hampshire with his inaugural commercial and then announcing his candidacy on *The Tonight Show* at midnight.

On the ground in Iowa, where they like to see their candidates up close, Thompson has some work to do. The underwhelming impact of Thursday's launch was compounded by the Thompson campaign style.

This, I suspect, is purely an expectations-adjustment problem. We're used to seeing the actor-senator in decisive, laconic, fictional form, ordering underlings around at the CIA or in a submarine, or uttering folksy obiter dicta for his team of prosecutors on *Law and Order*.

Speechmaking demands different thespian qualities. His style is measured, ponderous. Off the screen, the gruff, no-nonsense southern drawl can come across as rather lugubrious.

Gerard Baker is U.S. editor of the Times *of London and a contributing editor to* THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Heather Baker (no relation and, as far as I could tell, a Real Voter) told me afterwards, "I didn't see the charisma the way I see it on TV. He just seemed to be reading his words, rather than really feeling them."

In fairness, one suspects that part of the problem with the infant Thompson campaign is that it's been so long in delivery. Largely thanks to our efforts in the media, curiosity had waned even before the campaign started.

Rich Galen, the wily Republican consultant who has signed onto the Thompson team, spent a good deal of time Thursday explaining to the large crowd of slightly puzzled reporters that the low-key start was tactical.

He told me the election was like a football game. Everybody wants to play like Peyton Manning, flashy offense, throwing long-spirals to victory just like George Bush in 2000. But this year, patience will be rewarded, Galen says. A strong defense, not always the prettiest sight, is the key, together with a running game that will grind out enough yards to wear down the opposition.

It's certainly true that Thompson's substance is better than his campaign style. His speech dwells on the need to return to common-sense conservative values. His diagnosis of the Republican condition is spot on—that after the high point of 1994, the party lost its way and needs to reconnect with first principles of good governance.

His best line comes when he enunciates a simple creed that is the essence of conservative belief: "Some things in this changing world don't change." And he may be onto something when he speaks of the need to rebuild national unity and turn away from the lowering partisanship of the last ten years.

That theme of unity is plastered onto the campaign vehicles that ferry Thompson to the second event of his young campaign in Council Bluffs. "United in Our Core Beliefs," the green and gold buses improbably proclaim, as they whisk the fractious media hordes to the next event—where, by all accounts, Thompson's speech was more focused and energetic. Maybe the Thompson team realizes that a grinding running game only goes so far. ♦

The CIA Examines Itself

The results aren't pretty.

BY GABRIEL SCHOENFELD

Who is to blame for the intelligence disaster of September 11? The sixth anniversary of the attacks is upon us, and the finger-pointing continues unabated. Last month the CIA reluctantly made public a summary of a 2005 report prepared by its Office of Inspector General (OIG) undertaken to determine if any agency employees "should be held accountable" for failing to forestall the worst attack on our homeland in our history. Among others, the report harshly judges the performance of former CIA director George Tenet, and the media have understandably focused on that. But how do other lower-level CIA officers come out? That is a question about which the press has been remarkably incurious.

One important figure is Michael Scheuer, who served as chief of the Osama bin Laden unit, or the "UBL Station" as it was called, within the CIA's Counterterrorism Center (CTC) from 1996 to 1999 and then assumed other related positions until his resignation from the agency in 2004. Since leaving the CIA, Scheuer has become one of the nation's most visible counterterrorism experts. He has served as an on-air "consultant" to both CBS and ABC News, is sought after for comment by leading journalists, and teaches a course on terrorism at Georgetown University.

He has also been caught up in controversy, asserting for example that Israel has been conducting clandestine operations to influence American politics. Pressed to provide an example, he has cited, bizarrely, the establishment of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum on the National Mall. So high-profile has Scheuer become that even Osama bin Laden has been taking note. In his newly released video, the leader of al Qaeda singles Scheuer out as one of two writers—the other is Noam Chomsky—worth reading about world and Islamic affairs.

Given the brightening spotlight under which Scheuer has been dwelling, the question of how he fares in the OIG report is all the more interesting. But the answer is a minor mystery. All names have been omitted from the summary made available to the public. Because Scheuer was running the UBL Station for only a portion of the period under review, it is not clear at every juncture whether its findings apply to Scheuer or to his successor. But some clearly do pertain to him.

Before entering into particulars, one needs to understand something about the place of counterterrorism at the CIA in the years in which Scheuer was running the UBL Station. As one of the more devastating passages in the OIG report makes plain, even after the al Qaeda attacks on U.S. embassies in Africa in 1998 and Tenet's declaration that "he wanted no resources spared" in the battle against Osama bin Laden and that "we were at war," the CIA director was diverting resources away from counterterrorism to pay for unrelated programs.

Although such skewed budgeting sheds no direct light on Scheuer's performance, the scant attention paid to counterterrorism suggests that the UBL Station, a sub-unit of the counterterrorism department, was a bureaucratic backwater. Unsurpris-

Gabriel Schoenfeld, the senior editor of Commentary, *writes regularly for* contentions, *the magazine's blog.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ingly, therefore, as the report subsequently makes plain, it was not staffed with the CIA's savviest spies. Indeed, the OIG report states bluntly that "most of its officers did not have the operational experience, expertise, and training necessary to accomplish their mission in an effective manner."

Is that scathing assessment in any way connected to the mismatch between Scheuer's mission and his academic career? In 1986, Scheuer earned a Ph.D. from the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Canada. This school has earned an international reputation in the field of grain-storage technology, but it is not exactly known for its contribution to the study of foreign policy. In any event, given the wholly irrelevant nature of Scheuer's doctoral research—his dissertation traced the comings and goings of an obscure Canadian diplomat in the years before World War II—assigning him to run the bin Laden section was of a piece with, indeed, can be taken as a symbol of, the entrenched neglect of Islamic terrorism within the agency.

If training was not up to par in the UBL unit, neither was management. For one thing, the section had "detailees" from other government agencies on its staff. These employees were left in the dark about "the nature of their responsibilities," especially regarding the crucial task of regularly conveying information to their parent bodies. The unambiguous implication is that important counterterrorism leads never made it to organizations that were in a position to act on them, including, most critically, the FBI, the Federal Aviation Administration, and the State Department. Why not? Who was in charge?

Another management issue, undoubtedly complicating the UBL unit's analytical and operational tasks, was its engagement in a fierce and prolonged episode of bureaucratic friendly fire. Although details here have been heavily redacted, the report states "that UBL Station and [deleted] were hostile to each other and working at cross purposes." Although unable to assess the specific impact of this "counterproductive behavior," the OIG found that the firefight "complicated" and "delayed" certain unspecified counterterrorism efforts. If this intra-organizational warfare took place during his tenure, Scheuer must have been at its very center.

Of course, to be fair, even though the bureaucratic infighting is said to have continued "over a period of years before 9/11," it is not entirely clear if the OIG is describing a conflict that took place under Scheuer's reign or that of his successor. On the other hand, it is completely clear that while Scheuer was running the UBL Station, the unit was producing shoddy work.

As part of its mandate, the OIG assessed the quality of the CIA's counterterrorist "analytic products," that is, its studies of bin Laden and al Qaeda, in the relevant period. It found that "important elements were missing." It seems that when facts were gathered, "discussion of implications was generally weak." But facts were not always gathered. Indeed, "a number of important issues were covered insufficiently or not at all." In a conclusion unquestionably bearing on Scheuer's tenure, it found that there had been no "strategic assessment of al Qaeda by CTC or any other component" and that "no comprehensive report focusing on UBL [Osama bin Laden]" had been produced in the period running from 1993 to September 11, 2001. In other words, in 1996, after Scheuer was assigned the job of countering Osama bin Laden, he never bothered with the first and most elementary task of intelligence tradecraft: assembling and evaluating the known facts about his principal target.

All told, the lapses committed by the UBL unit were so egregious that the OIG report recommends that the CIA formally consider taking disciplinary action against the chiefs of the counterterrorism section—Scheuer's superiors—for "the manner in which they staffed the UBL component." A plausible inference, but one difficult to confirm without further declassification, is that putting and keeping the negligent Scheuer in charge was one element of their malfeasance.

If the full OIG report does indeed contain far more detailed criticism of Scheuer's performance, it would not come as a surprise. Significant questions have been raised in the past not only about Scheuer's competence as a manager and an analyst, but also about his probity.

Scheuer testified at length before the 9/11 Commission. Serious doubts have emerged about the veracity of the information he provided. Two of the 9/11 report commissioners, Jamie Gorelick and Slade Gorton, one a Democrat and the other a Republican, have described "thoroughly and exhaustively" interviewing Scheuer in the course of the commission's investigation. Their conclusion did not mince words: "On a number of factual issues, he was of real value. But much of what he had to say was not borne out by our investigation."

Scheuer's integrity is more radically called into question by his own false statements about his career, including his 2005 claim in the correspondence section of *Commentary* that he was awarded the CIA's Intelligence Commendation Medal in part for "supply[ing] all of the information used in the federal indictment of Osama bin Laden." Osama bin Laden was indicted in 1998. Scheuer was given his CIA medal in 1995, three years before the indictment and one year before he was assigned to the UBL Station.

On top of incompetence, such résumé embellishment does not form a pretty picture. As the prime plotter of September 11, Osama bin Laden would seem to have good reason to heap praise now on Michael Scheuer. Be that as it may, it would be wrong for us to place blame for the great intelligence failure on any one individual. The more dots one connects about the CIA, the more Scheuer appears to be a representative figure. Along with the continuing respect accorded this counterterrorism expert by the media, that is the real scandal revealed by the OIG report. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Sunni Side of the Street

A hopeful gathering in Ramadi.

BY MARIO LOYOLA

Ramadi, Iraq

As U.S. forces have pushed out from their bases and into neighborhoods across Iraq, and the surge has dramatically increased their capacity for offensive operations, a sense of security has swept into many parts of the country. Just as quickly—and just as proponents of the surge predicted—the seeds of political progress have begun to sprout. That was clear last week at the Anbar Forum, a historic gathering of national, provincial, and tribal leaders in Ramadi, the capital of Anbar province.

The Forum was hosted by the burly and jovial governor of Anbar, Mamoun Sami Rashid, who is said to have survived at least 34 assassination attempts. Among the guests where Iraq's two vice-presidents, Adil Abd al-Mahdi and Tariq al-Hashimi; deputy prime minister Barham Salih; and several members of parliament. Adding glamour to the guest-list were several dozen "paramount sheikhs" from Anbar's tribes, including Sattar al-Rishawi, who founded the Anbar Salvation Front and is credited by many as leader of the Anbar Awakening—as well as a show-stopping congressional delegation led by Senator Joseph Biden.

Having visited the government center in Ramadi about a month ago, I had trouble believing this was the same place. The ubiquitous traces of heavy machine-gun fire have disappeared; rubble has been removed; roads have been swept and washed; sidewalks and walls painted; shrubs and flowers planted. Nearby markets overflow with busy shoppers.

Though timed suspiciously close to the congressionally mandated midterm report on progress in Iraq, due this week, the forum was ostensibly unrelated. Its formal purpose was for the central government to announce a series of measures meant to mollify Iraq's Sunnis—who are centered in Anbar province.

> The recent GAO report notes that Iraq has yet to pass an oil-revenue-sharing law. But, as Iraq's deputy prime minister pointed out, the central government is already sharing that revenue without a formal law.

The Sunnis have two chief grievances against the central government: the lack of economic support for provincial reconstruction and provision of basic services (in Iraq, as in most Arab countries, provincial and local governments do not generate their own revenue) and the exploding population of Sunni "security detainees" held by the Shiite-dominated police and judicial system. Shockingly, virtually all of these detainees are held for months or years before even a preliminary hearing, whereupon nearly 50 percent of them are summarily released, or acquitted after short trials, for lack of evidence. Frustration with the government's failure to address the detainee issue is what led the Accordance Front to withdraw its six ministers from Maliki's government in July.

The Anbar Forum addressed both grievances. The government announced an enormous economic aid package for the remaining months of 2007: $70 million of additional money for various services (water, energy, health, etc.), $50 million in compensation to those whose homes were damaged or destroyed in large-scale fighting, and a $30 million microfinancing facility for business start-ups. There are plans for a Haditha dam to supply Anbar's cities with electricity directly (right now it goes by way of Baghdad) and a program to hire 6,000 new civil servants in Anbar. The government also committed to a program of judicial reform, promising to release hundreds of detainees immediately and establish targets for quick processing of the backlog of cases.

The announcements were well-received, and one interpreter, who has attended many similar gatherings, noted that the atmosphere was warm and collegial. There was one partial exception, however: Senator Joseph Biden offered a short set of remarks that oscillated between the surprisingly supportive and the marginally insulting.

Evoking the difficulties of America's own early formative period, Biden raised eyebrows with this charming statement: "Maybe you will do better than we did. But, respectfully, I doubt it."

He continued:

> These are difficult days. But as you are proving you can forge a future for Iraq that is much brighter than its past. If you continue we will continue to send you our sons and our daughters, to shed their blood with you and for you. But if you decide that you cannot live together, let us know. Then my son, who is a captain in the Army, will be able to stay home. I surely wish you well and Godspeed, as our futures are now tied together.

Mario Loyola, a fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, is embedded with the Marine Expeditionary Force in western Iraq.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Guests at the Anbar Forum gather around a traditional lunch of rice and lamb

MARIO LOYOLA

The exegesis of these comments began as soon as the gathering broke for lunch. The general perception was that Biden's principal audience was back home in America. But many of the Iraqi leaders present expressed understanding and even a reticent agreement with his point of view. This was also politically expedient: The central government delegation consisted mainly of Sunnis, and their position all along has been that it is the other side—Maliki and his Shiites—who are blocking reconciliation.

Another politically expedient response came thousands of miles away, when Senator Chuck Schumer, confronted with the Anbar Forum and the possibility that political progress will follow military progress, rolled out a catchy new talking point: Recent progress has come not because of the surge, but *in spite* of it.

Democratic party leaders have few alternatives. If they acknowledge that things are improving in Iraq, their constituents who once supported the war—and who helped both reelect the president in 2004 and give the Democrats control of Congress in 2006—may go back to supporting the war and the administration. The Democrats are now falling back on the redoubts they prepared months in advance—the congressionally mandated benchmarks for political progress, which fail to acknowledge progress on the ground.

For example, the recent GAO report notes that Iraq has yet to pass an oil-revenue-sharing law. But, as Iraq's deputy prime minister pointed out at the Anbar Forum, the central government is in fact already sharing that revenue without a formal law. Indeed, throughout the country, central and local governments are working together to refurbish hospitals, rehabilitate railways, and establish free trade zones. Tens of thousands of Sunni Iraqis have joined the security forces of the Ministry of Interior, which is dominated by Shiites. As many commentators have noted, events in Iraq over the past six months are not just positive—in some cases they have exceeded the most optimistic of prognostications.

Indeed in places like Diyala province and the Tigris valley south of Baghdad where the U.S. military is on the offensive, or Anbar where the enemy has been defeated, the troops are jubilant. And because they fought so hard for legitimacy and law, the troops have been increasingly rewarded with the trust and friendship of common Iraqis. At the Anbar Forum, this friendship was obvious in the warm and familiar embrace of tribal sheikhs and U.S. officers—and in the reaction to President Bush's pledge earlier in the week that the United States would not abandon its friends in Iraq. According to Army colonel John Charlton, commander of the force that cleared Ramadi of insurgents, it was a message the Anbaris needed to hear. "They were worried. They have a lot at stake. And it meant the world to them."

The Anbar Forum looked forward to the monumental work ahead, but it was also an opportunity to look back on how far we've come in just one year, and that made it a festive occasion, too—for all except a certain ambivalent senator from Delaware. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A “funster” with finger puppets helps implement the latest management fad to sweep through the workplace: mandatory fun.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Are We Having Fun Yet?

The infantilization of corporate America

By Matt Labash

Wilmington, Del.

If you're a loyal employee like me, you occasionally check your company's Vision Statement to make sure all the *T*'s in "empowerment" have been crossed, and the *I*'s in "mission" have been dotted. But if you come across buzzwords like "excellence" and "leadership," you should know that your corporate culture is sadly behind the curve—those terms are as '90s as Reebok Pumps, Zima, and Total Quality Management. There's a new core value on the loose, and it goes by the name of "Fun."

Maybe you assumed the fun stopped when the tech bubble burst. Or at least you hoped it did. After all, who could stand to read yet another profile of the ubiquitous IPO-enriched dot-commissar, who'd get the toe of his footie-pajamas (which he wore in his nonhierarchical workspace) caught in the brake of his indoor Razor scooter, causing him to bump into the Pachinko-machine/copier, making him spill his Tazoberry Crème Frappuccino all over the conference-room foosball table? Ahhhh, the boyish hijinks of it all. With the benefit of hindsight, we can all now agree that the real fun was watching dot-com execs ride their Segways to the unemployment line.

But if you thought the fun stopped there, you're sadly mistaken. Like a diseased appendix bursting and spreading infectious bacteria throughout the abdomen, fun is insinuating itself everywhere, into even the un-hippest workplaces. Witness the August issue of *Inc.* magazine, the self-declared "Handbook of the American Entrepreneur." Emblazoned on its cover was "Fun! It's the New Core Value." Beneath that was a photo of Jonathan Bush, the CEO of athenahealth, which helps medical practices interact with insurers. Bush was tearing his shirt apart to reveal a Batman costume underneath, the same costume in which he gave a full presentation to a prospective client after making a deal with one of his employees that if the latter lost 70 pounds, the management team would dress as superheroes for a day.

But that's just the beginning. There are 18 pages of similar stories to instruct and inspire employers to keep their employees happy at all costs, because happy employees make for happy customers. There are rubber chickens, Frisbee tosses, mustache-growing contests, pet psychics, interoffice memos alligator-clipped to toy cars, and ceremonies that honor employees for such accomplishments as having "the most animated hand gestures." Perks include on-campus wallyball courts, indoor soccer fields, air hockey, ping pong, billiards, yoga and aerobics classes, company pools and hot tubs, and Native-American themed nap rooms so that employees can sleep (sleep!) at work. And that's all at just one company—Aquascape, a supplier to pond-builders based in St. Charles, Illinois.

The genius of the NBC television show *The Office* (and the original BBC show from which it derived) is that boss Michael Scott, manager of a failing paper-distribution branch in Scranton, goes well beyond the Dilbertesque stereotype of the dictator cracking the whip over his cubicle monkeys. Armed with nothing but business-book clichés and a desire to be loved (he is nearly incapable of firing a person, or "counseling them out," in the current parlance), Michael fancies himself a fun guy, an entertainer. His employees don't think he's the least bit funny, yet the Dunder Mifflin office is a stage, and Michael is its headliner.

So you get episodes like "Beach Games," in which Michael, wearing his Sandals Resorts T-shirt, insists that his employees all load up the "Par-taayyyy Bus" for a day at the beach. Except then he announces, to the displeasure of everyone but his suck-up henchman Dwight Schrute (whose most pressing concern is whether he's "assistant regional manager" or "assistant to the regional manager"), that "Today, we are not just spending a day at the beach. We are all participating in mandatory fun activities. Funtivities!" Under the guise of fun, the employees will be

Matt Labash is a senior writer at The Weekly Standard.

PHOTOS BY LEV NISNEVITCH / WEEKLY STANDARD

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

subjected to Sumo-wrestling contests and walking over a bed of hot coals to determine who will replace Michael. Dwight, pumping his fist as everyone else groans, says, "I knew it wasn't just a trip to the beach! I hope there will be management parables!" *The Office* is a sitcom, but it could easily be a reality show.

No slaves to fashion here at THE WEEKLY STANDARD, where the clocks stopped around 1957, our office is mercifully free of such managerial fads. About the closest our bosses come to official levity is the "inspirational" poster in the mailroom. A placid scene of rowers sculling on a glassy lake as their coxswain shouts instructions is disrupted by the caption: "Get to Work—You aren't being paid to believe in the power of your dreams." My non-journalism friends aren't quite as fortunate.

As I contacted them for input to this story, their pain was evident. They are smart, competent, creative people with highly refined senses of humor—fully formed adults. Yet they're unable to escape the condescending infantilization of their workplaces, the coercive "fun," the forced-march through the land of clenched-teeth joviality that so often takes place under the dreaded guise of "team building." One pal, who works for a large financial concern, tells me darkly, "My role here is largely 'gleetivities' oriented. We're actually planning a group event that will involve 'conference bikes.' It's a rickshaw-related transportation option focused on tourists. It's a bike with five seats in a circle. Should be completely ridiculous."

Another friend in the information technology sector lays it bare on background, since frowning on "funtivities" is considered very bad form by upper management. I'll let him have the floor. God knows he's earned it:

> Every typical corporate geek groans when we have to participate in these outings or events. I've done jet-pilots, geocaching, a lot of "war-gaming," all in the name of team-building. The truth is, if they are done well they are a lot of fun, despite the pessimism that invariably precedes them. If they are done poorly, they are bad beyond your wildest journalistic dreams. I've had a few that have made me want to buy a VW bus and [hit the road]. There was one that was just cancelled where we had to do jazz improvisation in support of team-building. Everybody was groaning big-time on that one. Can you imagine standing up in front of 70 directors playing f—ing bongo drums? It got cancelled because of a firm re-org, not because it was ludicrous. But that was one where even the dumber people who actually enjoyed *Forrest Gump* were complaining about how gay it was.

Since the advent of modern management consulting, a chapter that arguably began with the founding of the industry's 800-lb gorilla, McKinsey & Company, in the 1920s, the business world has cleaved into two halves: Those paid to work for a living, and those paid to come to your office, take lots of notes, run up expenses on your dime, and then file reports in impenetrable consultant-ese describing your shortcomings—how, for instance, you failed to incentivize your brand pyramid and now need to drill down on the granularity of your mind-share while on-ramping your knowledge-process outsourcing.

There is, of course, a consultant for everything these days. Professional consultant-basher Martin Kihn, who is himself a consultant, and who wrote *House of Lies: How Management Consultants Steal Your Watch and Then Tell You the Time*, writes of everything from flag consultants to compost consultants to Satanic consultants who don't actually worship Lucifer (consultants tend not to believe in anything). So it stands to reason that with the new core value of fun on the ascent, there would be fun consultants. They don't have a trade association yet, and they go by all sorts of different names, usually with "fun" as a prefix (funsultants, funcilitators, etc). But if you had to distill what they do in one word, "fun" would be your best bet.

Since we all forget to play as adults, as funsultants tell us, they seem intent on speaking to us as though we're children.

A considerable corpus of literature on their discipline is amassing. I use the word "literature" loosely, to mean a series of often ungrammatical double-spaced sentences put on paper, slapped between festively colored covers, and sold to mouth-readers with too much discretionary income. While most business books, according to Kihn, are written on about a 7th-grade level (there are exceptions like *Who Moved My Cheese? for Teens* that are written on a 5th-grade level), the funsultant literature regresses all the way back to primary school. Since we all forget to play as adults, as funsultants repeatedly tell us, they seem intent on speaking to us as though we're children.

Their books are thick with instances of how successful businessmen keep things loosey-goosey at work. Forget industriousness, talent, and know-how—the wellspring of employees' satisfaction, creativity, and prosperity is fun. In Mike Veeck's *Fun Is Good*, the cofounder of Hooters Restaurants reveals, "I don't know if we could've survived without humor," whereas to the untrained eye it looked like Buffalo Chicken Strips served with large sides of waitress's breasts were the secret to his success. Whatever. "Fun" is the cure-all for anything that ails your company.

If you thought there were only *301 Ways to Have Fun*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Team-building at Bouldens One Hour Heating and Air Conditioning, Newark, Delaware

at Work, as suggested by the smash book that's been translated into 10 languages, then you're shortchanging yourself, because technically, there are 602 ways, according to the follow-up, *301 More Ways to Have Fun at Work*. Using examples culled from real companies in real office parks throughout America, the authors suggest using fun as "an organizational strategy—a strategic weapon to achieve extraordinary results" by training your people to learn the "fun-damentals" so as "to create fun-atics" (most funsultants appear to be paid by the pun).

Here's an abbreviated list of the jollity that will ensue at your place of business if you follow their advice: "joy lists," koosh balls, office-chair relay races, marshmallow fights, funny caption contests, job interviews conducted in Groucho glasses or pajamas, wacky Olympics, memos by Frisbee, voicemails in cartoon-character voices, rap songs to convey what's learned at leadership institutes, "breakathons," bunny teeth, and asking job prospects to bring show and tell items such as "a stuffed Tigger doll symbolizing the interviewee's energetic and upbeat attitude" or perhaps a "neon-pink mask and snorkel worn to demonstrate a sense of humor, self-deprecating nature, and sense of adventure."

In the interest of not appearing to be a killjoy, I should disclose that I am adamantly pro fun-at-work, if by "fun

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

at work" you mean "sending tasteless emails to friends," "stockpiling office supplies," and "leaving early." And it is hard to argue with the salutary effects of enjoying yourself, even and especially at work. The medical literature, often brandished by funsultants, is unanimous on the health benefits of laughter (though nobody has yet looked into the possible detrimental effects of forced laughter brought on by leadership-institute raps).

Any Genesis subscriber knows that hard toil was originally conceived as a curse, God breaking the news to Adam that he'd be forced to stop lounging naked while snacking on fresh fruit, and that meals would now be served by the sweat of his brow. Mankind has pretty much looked for loopholes ever since. As you learn in Classics 101, the ancient Greek word for work was *ponos* derived from the same root as the Latin *poena*, meaning "sorrow." Aristotle regarded work as a wasteful impediment to pursuing virtue. And the Romans were so work-averse that they outsourced all they could to slaves.

A good funsultant, however, doesn't bill fun at the office as a cessation of work, but rather, casts the two as halves of a whole, what Leslie Yerkes, author of *Fun Works: Creating Places Where People Love To Work*, calls a "Fun/Work Fusion™." How necessary or advisable is it for employers to facilitate fun, and how fun could the fun possibly be that they are facilitating? After all, plenty of surveys show that people are pretty good at fostering their own fun at work and yet still remain a largely unsatisfied lot. (For all employer nods to serving as cruise directors on the Funship Lollipop, a Conference Board survey reports that fewer than half of all Americans are satisfied with their jobs, down from 60 percent 20 years ago.)

A Microsoft survey of 38,000 people worldwide found that workers, by their own admission, only average three productive days per week. A Salary.com/America Online survey found the average worker admitting to squandering 2.09 hours of each 8-hour workday, excluding lunch and breaks, and other estimates have put the number as high as 40 percent of each day. A full 70 percent of Internet porn consumption takes place during office hours, and perhaps much of the rest of the time is dedicated to crafting Internet parodies, such as this one by one "Robert Moore," who apes the rhetoric of a funsultant, saying employers can make the workplace more fun by having "Tick Days" ("place ticks on the necks of your staff"). Writes Moore:

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There's gold in institutionally mandated humor. Humor, when used and managed effectively, can make your employees more productive cogs in your corporate machine. A laughing employee more quickly forgets the worthlessness of his existence and gets on to the daily drudgery. A smiling employee masks his discontent and horror from potential clients. The demons that gnaw achingly painful holes in his or her intestines are forgotten long enough to finalize that sales report.

There is a remedy for cynicism like Moore's: Hire a funsultant. As Alan Briskin, author of *The Stirring of the Soul in the Workplace*, writes: "Sarcasm is one-sided fun. It is limited and non-universal." Fun isn't just about theory in books. It's about putting clown shoes on the ground.

So you might hire someone like Ronald Culberson, who heads FUNsulting, Etc., "injecting humor into healthcare" (the *u*'s in his logo are shaped like a smile). Not only does Ron understand the "intrinsic power of combining EXCELLENCE with humor," he's even set up a "humor injections" blog, giving cyberslackers a way to have good, clean, nonsarcastic fun.

Or you could hire "Energy Expert" Gail Hahn of Funcilitators, who can help you practice "Fun Shui," conduct some "Out of the Box Olympics" for teambuilding, and who is "authorized to lead laughter sessions sanctioned by the World Laughter Tour." Or perhaps Buford P. Fuddwhacker would be more to your liking. He dresses like a "backwoods, country nerd in red suspenders and polyester pants" and promises your employees some "high-octane country sunshine" with his "wacky inventions and crazy stories about kinfolk and farm animals. But there's always a point to be made, and he weaves *valuable insights*, *motivational messages*, and *powerful teaching* into his tall tales." Pass the 'shine, Buford!

For my money however, if I was the kind of employer who was funhibited enough to have to hire a pro, I'd go with the Fun Department of Wilmington, Delaware, which endeavors to bring "recess to work." (Recess was always my best subject.) Last month, I went to see them in action.

I met one of their four principal partners for dinner—Jayla Boire. Her title is Marketing Maven (nobody in the company has a traditional title). She looks like a Marketing Maven too. She is bouncy, perky, tall, and blonde, with sculpted tan legs that start just above her ankles and end right below her clavicle. I wouldn't call them sexy—HR wouldn't approve—but they're fun to look at.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

As I get the Montepulciano flowing (wine=fun), Jayla tells me about how she got into the "funnertainment" business. Once a freelance journalist whose favorite story ever was one she wrote on a local coffee shop named Brew Ha Ha, she had a host of marketing jobs before hanging out a shingle with her other straight-marketing company, The Right Idea. Jayla is a hardcore marketer. For fun, she often goes to Target to look at their innovative packaging.

Wilmington is a company town for DuPont, the world's second largest chemical company ("Uncle Dupey," as she calls it), and Jayla worked for them too. She thinks that's when the fun started. I ask her if she had a burning desire to further the cause of polyurethane. She didn't, she says, "though I thought nylon was pretty spiffy, and no woman would argue with lycra." But having to make a chemical company seem interesting to outsiders—she wonders if "that wasn't the beginning of thinking about how you make work fun."

Funsultant Mark "Lord of the Deal" Doughty

Even before they started the company, Jayla and her partner Nick Gianoulis, whose title is Godfather of Fun, had a reputation among their circle of friends as being fun people. "They'd say oh my gosh, here they come, it's the fun department." They might do something like stage suitcase races at a New Year's Eve party (racing down the street with suitcases), and Jayla would always be on the picnic committee. An inveterate griller, Nick, who was a district manager in the electrical wholesaling business, was a member of the Circuit Club, which planned fun activities in their workplace.

But planning all that internal fun can be a real time goblin if you actually want to, well, work. So Jayla and Nick started thinking about providing a "turnkey solution" for companies who wanted to fun-up the workplace. They ended up joining forces with two other partners, Dave Raymond, the Emperor of Fun and Games, and Mark Doughty, Lord of the Deal, who would expertly translate fun theory into fun-filled games.

Dave and Mark also run their own successful mascot company—they are trainers and headhunters for furry creatures who perform at major and minor league baseball games. Raymond Entertainment Group shares office space with the Fun Department, and the Fun Department has its own mascot, a "purple party dude" named Reggie. But Jayla makes clear that the partners don't wish to have the mascot company used as a "brand identifier," even though Dave "knows fun from the inside out." From 1978-1993, he served as the Philadelphia Phillies mascot, the furry green bullhorn-beaked Phillie Phanatic. Thanks partly to Dave, the Phanatic is now in the Mascot Hall of Fame, even if Dave's father once called his son "a green transvestite."

The Fun Department is a full-service fun-shop. They boast an impressive client roster, everyone from DuPont to AstraZeneca to QVC. Jayla says that they might be signing up American Standard, the toilet manufacturer, with whom they have a meeting on September 11 (tragic anniversaries=not fun; potty humor=fun).

The partners "take the work out of your fun" with a "turnkey fun infusion for your business." Services include everything from quick toy drops ("fun on the run") to staging Solid Gold danceoffs, paper airplane contests, silly-string wars, human roulette, and a couple dozen other funtivities. They "create consistent, quick, at-work experiences that motivate and invigorate the work environment." They have "fun for fun's sake—while reducing tension, bolstering creativity, and building relationships." They have business cards featuring "Sparky," a smiling blue-faced logo with crazy, spinning goggle-eyes. "He's the face of fun," says Jayla. "Or of mental illness," I helpfully add.

Dave later tells me that at AstraZeneca, the pharmaceutical company, the Fun Department has even taken over the company's seldom-used lactation room, dressed it up as a doctor's office complete with a doctor character and a gum-cracking assistant, and wrote "prescriptions to play" while treating people "for terminal seriousness." AstraZeneca, it turns out, has a culture of fun, which makes the Fun Department's job easier. During their initial meeting, the head of HR told him that they'd just recently filled a coworker's office with packing peanuts on his birthday. "They get it," says Dave. "They understand."

Helping the Fun Department deliver all this levity are the Funsters, on-call hourly-wagers, mostly college students who are fit and vital and look like Abercrombie models, and who wear zany tie-dyed shock-yellow-and-orange T-shirts with "Team Fun" inscribed on the back.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I'm given a T-shirt—a medium instead of large, since the large is "boxy"—and I'm wearing it as I write. It's cutting off my circulation. But I'm told snug'n'sexy=fun.

The Funsters go through Dave's Fun Boot Camp, and memorize the Funster training manual, where they learn the ins and outs of presenting fun, and also the no-no's. "No touching," says Jayla. "We have to be very careful. One of the things we've learned is, I'll be at an event, and some of my colleagues will be in that moment, because they're trained to be Funsters. So there's the CEO ripping his shirt off and swinging it over his head. And they're like, 'Oh my God, look at that guy!' And here's me (yelling) 'HR! HR!'"

The zaniness works, says Jayla, because "We're not their bosses." Still, she says, "We're crazy people. [But] we're completely irreverent respectfully, within the constraints of all the HR rules, because there are HR rules. No touching. Anything you think might be offensive." Consequently, the Fun Department deliberates over what games to play.

They reluctantly okayed Balloon Choo Choo, a race where people press balloons between their bodies, then chug away, moving as a team without dropping any. "We thought long and hard about adding that to our repertoire," says Jayla. "Say the balloon drops and somebody bumps into each other from behind. . . . We test every game. We think carefully about what body parts are involved." If Funsters see anything inappropriate, "they have to fill out a form" that would say, for instance: "Matt dropped his balloon and Jayla bumped into him in a way that might be construed as inappropriate." That way, they can say, if a concerned client calls, "Yes, we did notice that, and wrote it down. It happened at 12:05 P.M., and we talked to Matt and Jayla about it and they were okay with it."

Putting on my skeptic's hat, perhaps having never taken it off, I tell Jayla that it's well and good to have fun, but surely everybody doesn't subscribe to their brand of it. My office, for instance, would be a very tough sell. She looks at me wearily. She's dealt with Doubting Thomases before. "We can [bring the fun] for you too. You crotchety old curmudgeons." I tell her I just don't see it, though I would pay to watch her bolster Fred Barnes's morale with finger puppets. She indicates Fred would be an immediate target. "That's our job. We engage them," she says, adding with icy, assassin-like resolve. "Fred's a *fun-killer*. Our job is to eliminate the fun-killers."

Early the next morning, the Funsters are giddy with anticipation in preparation for a gig: getting loose, doing dance moves, engaging in lots of verbal towel-snapping. They are riding high, standing around a television set at a local gathering place/gym, high-five-ing each other after having to wait through all the dreary news to watch CNN's Dr. Sanjay Gupta do an adulatory piece on their company (publicity=fun; Minneapolis bridge collapse=not fun). Also, the *Inc*. magazine fun issue has just come out, and even though they're not in it, Jayla says they consider it a "validation of concept."

Afterwards, they shove off for nearby New Castle, Delaware, where they will bring the fun to HBCS, which stands for Hospital Billing & Collection Service. As a company that boasts of its value-added services utilizing advanced technology, whose experienced technical staff builds rugged interfaces that support financial efforts through the use of industry standards and web-based protocols, and who are proud as all get-out of their HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) compliance with government guidelines and requirements related to standard electronic transaction processes and integrity controls, they don't exactly scream: Barrel of Monkeys. But the Fun Department has come to do the company's second annual "playfair."

Housed in a nondescript brown-brick building, HBCS is surrounded by acre after acre of similarly anonymous looking office parks, places with seemingly identical topiary and opaque names that betray nothing about the kind of business actually being transacted. My pulse quickens as I spy the letters "TA" on one nearby building, since everyone knows T&A=fun. But a subhead on the signage reveals that they are merely "World Leaders in Thermal Analysis and Rheolog." (Not fun.)

I make my way into HBCS to spy a look at their call center, where telephone operator after telephone operator sits in a drably lit matrix of cubicles, trying to cadge money from sick people and their families in eight-hour shifts, expected by management to hit quotas, as one automated call after another rolls in. It looks like a hard, monotonous job.

"That's our job," says Jayla with icy, assassin-like resolve. "Our job is to eliminate the fun-killers."

Several human resources types collect around me and drape a visitor's badge around my neck as if I'm a creature from another planet. They proudly show off the place. They wear shorts and flip-flops and other casual-wear, as it's something of a beach day for them. Since there's no

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

beach or ocean nearby, however, funtivities will commence under the theme "Playfair Under the Sea." In the hospitality tent on a narrow spit of grass behind their building, there is lots of maritime décor: seashell fans, buckets of sand, plastic crabs, and starfish.

Inside are wan touches to cheer up the place: a glittery star hanging from the corkboard ceiling above the head of a top performer's cubicle here, a beach ball or a fish mobile there. Matt Sanders, a manager, sits in his office, a mini-cowboy hat attached to a headband adorning his head. He has a helium tank on his desk, and is blowing up balloons that he then twists into hat shapes for coworkers. He says such displays let the employees see "our management group is actually human. They enjoy having fun. I think this day is actually critical. . . . Everybody's excited. People I never met before coming and saying, 'Hey Matt, I want a hat.'" For some reason, this makes me want to cry.

On the call floor, Brian Wasilewski, VP of operations, is crisply dressed, his plaid shorts and brown beach shirt looking as though they've been starched. He says though they've hired the Fun Department to fun up their company picnic, they try to keep it fun year round. How so, I ask. Well, he says, during National Healthcare Compliance Week, "We did Compliance Jeopardy. Basically, we sent out a list of compliance-related questions at the beginning of the week, and anyone who scored a certain amount or higher got to play in the Compliance Jeopardy game." Winners went into the training room, and played Compliance Jeopardy just like the real game show. Answers had to be in the form of questions. There were Daily Doubles. Gift certificates were awarded. But all the categories revolved around things like privacy information and patient claims. Says one VP of human resources: "We try."

> What the American worker really wants, more than anything, is to see his boss get hit with something.

As the funtivities kick off, the Funsters form a dancing gauntlet around the back door, wearing swim caps and snorkels and other water-related funnery. They say cheery things like "Nice hat, girlfriend!" and "Welcome to the fun!" while employees, blinking into the blinding sunlight, smile nervously, as a DJ booms "Takin' Care of Business" by Bachman-Turner Overdrive. Most head straight for the buffet line to feast on clams that are bound in mini-fishing nets, which seem to be secured with Gordian knots. When one Funster asks a large black woman how the food is, she says, "I'll let you know if I can ever get to it."

There are "play stations" all over the grounds: an oversized inflated basketball hoop, a ring-toss pit, a Yahtzee game with giant fuzzy dice, a "Deep Sea Fishing" station, which consists of two baby pools with children's fishing poles to fish out magnetic rubber duckies that can be redeemed for trinkets like finger puppets and wind-up toys. There are all sorts of relay games, like the aforementioned racy Balloon Choo Choo. I stand next to Mark Doughty, Lord of the Deal, watching the spectacle. He is wearing a referee's shirt, though he says, "I'm the referee just like in wrestling—the one who didn't see anything. It's not about playing by the rules. It's about them having fun."

As we watch a "Pass the Treasure Key" exercise, in which teams have to wrap yarn around their body parts, then string a key on it, passing the key all the way down the line in the fastest time, I ask Mark what the point of this is, expecting some sort of management parable. He thinks for a second, then says, "I got nuthin'. There's no lessons in this. If a moron asks you to tie yourself up with a rope and pass the key—don't do it." Unlike many other funsultants, to the Fun Department's credit, they go extremely light on the "OD," or organizational development—the cloying morals-of-the-story that usually follow such teambuilding exercises. They think it's much more important to have "fun for fun's sake."

One of the most popular funtivities involves a manager's face-off, where the bosses must grab a partner, and toss water-balloons back and forth to each other, wearing pirate patches on one eye to distort depth perception. They must also utter "Argghhhh" before each throw just to further humiliate themselves, cueing the hoi polloi that everyone has "permission to play."

One half of the managerial team that wins is Paul Kutney. I catch him cheating by flipping up his eye patch, and zero in on him afterwards to blackmail some truth out of him. I suggest to Kutney that what the American worker really wants, more than anything, is to see his boss get hit with something. "If I got hit," he says, "I know people would be out there cheering."

I ask him how he feels about companies formalizing fun. He sees the upside of it, he says. Out here, he's relaxed, he's in shorts, he's eating Italian ice. And in there? I ask. "I'm a prick," he says without pause. "I've got seven people that have to process 1.7 million claims a year. So I have to be a prick." There's not a lot of time for fun and games

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in his world. "You have to break up the monotony somewhat," he says. So how do you do that now? I ask. "In my group, we don't," he says. "There's only so many hours in a day, and we've got to get so much work done. So everybody has to keep their heads down, and keep going."

The culminating funtivity is a cash grab on a Twister-like mat between two people, in which they stuff as much money into their various pockets, shirtfronts, and orifices as humanly possible. To find out who the lucky candidates are, the Funsters play "hands up/hands down." It's a variation on heads or tails, which the Funsters used to play by having everybody grab their heads or tails. But Mark says they had to modify it. "We had a client who was a little challenged by the political incorrectness," he explains. "[He said], we don't want our employees to put their hands on their tails, even if it's their own tails. We said we can play heads or hips. And they said 'no.' Sooooo—hands up, hands down."

One of the finalists in hands up/hands down is in a wheelchair. But after he incorrectly guesses "up," when the Funsters call "down," he is eliminated. You can sense a Funster sigh of relief (people grabbing as much cash as they can=fun; cripple flopping around on the ground trying to grab cash with his teeth=not fun).

The Fun Department: (from left) Nick, Mark, Jayla, Dave

The afternoon heat is sweltering, and by the end of the playfair, HBCS's CFO is in a magnanimous mood, and lets everybody go home, though it's only 3 P.M. As a fun-killer, it'd bring me some pleasure to report nobody had any fun. But that wouldn't be true. People laughed, people lined the dance floor during the Booty Call, people cleared out of the parking lot before the boss could finish his announcement. It was a good party (though "a little beer wouldn't hurt nobody," one Sprite-sipping woman told me), but not that good.

Still, there was a refreshing lack of management parables, and the Funsters, purists to the last, really did seem to want to bring the fun for fun's sake. Fishing rubber duckies out of a baby pool isn't my idea of fun, but I learned something. Call it a management parable, if you will: If you treat people like they're six years old, eventually they'll start responding in kind.

So who's to say the funsultants are worse than anything else that's happened to the American corporate drone over the decades? After all the paradigm-shifting and diversity-training and outsourcing and TQM'ing and synergizing and empowering and value-adding and globalizing and downsizing and full-frontal lobotomizing, maybe finger puppets are just the logical terminus.

As for the funsultants themselves, they're truly living the American dream. They've beat the system. As Lord of the Deal Mark Doughty explains, "I work very hard not to have a real job." Is that the work ethic that made America great? Probably not. But who am I to judge? I make a living writing about funsultants.

I turn to another old friend of mine, much more steeped in business culture than I am. He's my college buddy Don McKinney, a creative director/advertising hotshot responsible for campaigns like Nissan's "Shift." When I ask him what all this means, he strikes an optimistic note: "When you and I were born, there were 2 billion people in the world. Today there are 6 billion. Maybe there are only 2 billion real jobs and all the rest of us are being relegated to bullshit jobs, like fun coaches and creative directors. If we took away all the bullshit jobs, our economy would collapse."

On the other hand, he emails, "It occurs to me how completely spoiled we are as workers. I don't ever remember my dad or any of his friends having fun at work. Yet as soon as a job turns into an actual job (something my dad would actually call work), we start looking around for the next prettiest girl at the dance.

"'Coercive joviality,' as you put it, would have gotten your ass kicked in the machine shop, or at the very least it would have been seen as deviant. I would be willing to bet that, compared with the last generation, an overwhelming number of us would be considered support staff in a war. If you're in marketing, what do you actually do? You're not making anything. The best that can possibly be said about your output is that you've invented a bunch of new words that make your profession just esoteric enough that the lay person (the guy in the machine shop) will pay an extra quarter of a cent on every pack of Doublemint gum to 'double his pleasure and double his fun.'"

Don had some momentum, and I wanted to hear more. But he couldn't write anymore, he said. He had to go. Duty called: "I have an all-day meeting on metrics." ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Jew-Hatred and Jihad

The Nazi roots of the 9/11 attack

By Matthias Küntzel

The idea of using suicide pilots to obliterate the skyscrapers of Manhattan originated in 1940s Berlin. "In the latter stages of the war, I never saw Hitler so beside himself as when, as if in a delirium, he was picturing to himself and to us the downfall of New York in towers of flame," wrote Albert Speer in his diary. "He described the skyscrapers turning into huge burning torches and falling hither and thither, and the reflection of the disintegrating city in the dark sky."

Not only Hitler's fantasy but also his plan of action foreshadowed September 11: He envisioned having kamikaze pilots fly light aircraft packed with explosives and with no landing gear into Manhattan skyscrapers. The drawings for the Daimler-Benz *Amerikabomber* from the spring of 1944 show giant four-engine planes with raised undercarriages for transporting small bombers. The bombers would be released shortly before the planes reached the East Coast, after which the mother plane would return to Europe.

Hitler's rapture at the thought of Manhattan in flames indicates his underlying motive: not merely to fight a military adversary, but to kill all Jews everywhere. Possessed of the notion that the whole of the Second World War was a struggle against an imaginary Jewish enemy, he deemed "the USA a Jewish state" and New York the center of world Jewry. "Wall Street," as a popular book published in Munich in 1919 put it, "is, so to speak, the Military Headquarters of Judas. From there his threads radiate out across the entire world." From 1941 on, Hitler pushed to get the bombers into production, in order to "be able to teach the Jews a lesson in the form of terror attacks on American metropolises." Towards the end of the war this idea became an obsession.

Sixty years later, it so happens, the assault on the World Trade Center was coordinated from Germany. Mohamed Atta, the Egyptian who piloted the plane that struck the North Tower of the World Trade Center; Marwan al-Shehhi, from the United Arab Emirates, who steered the plane into the South Tower; Ziad Jarrah, from Lebanon, who crashed United Airlines Flight 93 near Shanksville, Pennsylvania; and their friends Ramzi Binalshibh, a Yemeni, and the Moroccan student Mounir al-Motassedeq had formed an al Qaeda cell in Hamburg, where they held regular "Koran circle" meetings with sympathizers.

What ideas propelled Atta and the others to act? Witnesses provided part of the answer at the world's first 9/11-related trial, the prosecution of al-Motassedeq, which took place in Hamburg between October 2002 and February 2003. One participant in the Koran circle meetings, Shahid Nickels, said Atta's *Weltanschauung* was based on a "National Socialist way of thinking." Atta was convinced that the Jews were striving for world domination and considered New York City the center of world Jewry, which was, in his opinion, Enemy No. 1. Fellow students who lived in Motassedeq's dormitory testified that he shared these views and waxed enthusiastic about a forthcoming "big action." One student quoted Motassedeq as saying, "The Jews will burn and in the end we will dance on their graves."

Amazingly, neither the American media nor the international press took much notice of this testimony, largely refusing to report on Atta's and Motassedeq's explicit Jew-hatred. The above quotations come from the weekly *Der Spiegel* and from the detailed notes of the trial taken by journalist Michael Eggers, who attended every session and wrote about it for Reuters. If this had been the trial of a Ku Klux Klan member or someone from the far right such as Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh, reports of Nazi-like dreams of exterminating the Jews would prob-

---

Matthias Küntzel is a Hamburg-based political scientist and a research associate at the Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. This essay includes material from his forthcoming book Jihad and Jew-Hatred: Islamism, Nazism and the Roots of 9/11 *(Telos Press, November 2007). This article was translated from German by Colin Meade.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hitler envisioned kamikaze pilots flying light aircraft packed with explosives and with no landing gear into Manhattan skyscrapers. The drawings for the Daimler-Benz *Amerikabomber* from 1944 show giant four-engine planes with raised undercarriages for transporting small bombers. Only the mother plane would return to Europe.

IMAGE FROM *HEINZ J. NOWORRA AND KARLHEINZ KENS, DIE DEUTSCHEN FLUGZEUGE 1933-1945*

ably have made the headlines. But in this case, involving attackers of Arab background, journalists apparently found the issue irrelevant. Moreover, this Jew-hatred was no quirk of the Hamburg cell. Osama bin Laden himself declared in 1998, "The enmity between us and the Jews goes back far in time and is deep rooted. There is no question that war between us is inevitable. . . . The Hour of Resurrection shall not come before Muslims fight Jews."

Even the *9/11 Commission Report*, the summation produced by the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States in July 2004, falls short in this regard. Its chapter on "Bin Laden's worldview" makes no mention of his hatred of Jews. This silence is all the more surprising in that the commission quotes documents in which bin Laden unambiguously expresses his hatred of Jews. For example, in the "Letter to the American People" of November 2002, which the report repeatedly cites, bin Laden warns: "The Jews have taken control of your media, and now control all aspects of your life making you their servants and achieving their aims at your expense." Osama goes on: "Your law is the law of rich and wealthy people. . . . Behind them stand the Jews who control your policies, media and economy." Yet the report's authors inexplicably fail to see the significance of these words and the ideology behind them. The report also ignores the history of Islamism. It accords the entire pre-1945 period just five lines. Yet it is precisely this period that fostered the personal contacts and ideological affinities between early Islamism and late Nazism—the linkage between Jew-hatred and jihad.

Despite common misconceptions, Islamism was born not during the 1960s but during the 1930s. Its rise was inspired not by the failure of Nasserism but by the rise of Nazism, and prior to 1951 all its campaigns were directed not against colonialism but against the Jews. It was the Organization of the Muslim Brotherhood, founded in 1928, that established Islamism as a mass movement. The significance of the Brotherhood to Islamism is comparable to that of the Bolshevik party to communism: It was and remains to this day the ideological reference point and organizational core for all later Islamist groups, including al Qaeda and Hamas.

It is true that British colonial policy produced Islamism, insofar as Islamism viewed itself as a resistance movement against "cultural modernity." The Islamists' solution was the call for a new order based on *sharia*. But the Brotherhood's jihad was not directed primarily against the British. Rather, it focused almost exclusively on Zionism and the Jews. Membership in the Brotherhood shot up from 800 to 200,000 between 1936 and 1938, according to the research of Abd Al-Fattah Muhammad El-Awaisi for his book *The Muslim Brothers and the Palestine Question 1928-1947*. In those two years the Brotherhood conducted only one major campaign in Egypt, and it was against Zionism and the Jews.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This campaign, which established the Brotherhood as a mass movement, was set off by a rebellion in Palestine directed against Jewish immigration and initiated by the notorious grand mufti of Jerusalem, Amin al-Husseini. The Brotherhood organized mass demonstrations in Egyptian cities under the slogans "Down With the Jews!" and "Jews Get Out of Egypt and Palestine!" Leaflets called for a boycott of Jewish goods and Jewish shops, and the Brotherhood's newspaper, *al-Nadhir*, carried a regular column on "The Danger of the Jews of Egypt," which published the names and addresses of Jewish businessmen and allegedly Jewish newspaper publishers all over the world, attributing every evil, from communism to brothels, to the "Jewish danger."

The Brotherhood's campaign against the Jews used not only Nazi-like tactics but also German funding. As the historian Brynjar Lia recounted in his monograph on the Brotherhood, "Documents seized in the flat of Wilhelm Stellbogen, the Director of the German News Agency affiliated to the German Legation in Cairo, show that prior to October 1939 the Muslim Brothers received subsidies from this organization. Stellbogen was instrumental in transferring these funds to the Brothers, which were considerably larger than the subsidies offered to other anti-British activists."

At the same time, the Muslim Brotherhood was the first modern organization to propagate the archaic idea of a belligerent jihad and the longing for death. In 1938, Hassan al-Banna, the Brotherhood's charismatic founder, published his concept of jihad in an article entitled "The Industry of Death." He wrote: "To a nation that perfects the industry of death and which knows how to die nobly, God gives proud life in this world and eternal grace in the life to come." This slogan was enthusiastically taken up by the "Troops of God," as the Brothers called themselves. As their battalions marched down Cairo's boulevards in semi-fascist formation they would burst into song: "We are not afraid of death, we desire it. . . . Let us die to redeem the Muslims!"

Moroccan student Mounir al-Motassedeq, a member of Mohamed Atta's al Qaeda cell in Hamburg: "The Jews will burn and in the end we will dance on their graves."

ZUMA PRESS

The death cult that became a hallmark of modern jihadism was laced with Jew-hatred from the very beginning. Moreover, this attitude sprang not only from European influences; it also drew directly on Islamic sources. First, Islamists considered, and still consider, Palestine an Islamic territory, *Dar al-Islam*, where Jews must not run a single village, let alone a state. At best, in their view, this land should be *judenrein*; at the very least, Jews there should be relegated to subservient status. Second, Islamists justify their aspiration to eliminate the Jews of Palestine by invoking the example of Muhammad, who in the 7th century not only expelled two Jewish tribes from Medina, but also beheaded the entire male population of a third Jewish tribe, before proceeding to sell all the women and children into slavery. Third, they find support and encouragement for their actions and plans in the anti-Jewish passages of the Koran.

After World War II it became apparent that the center of global Jew-hatred was shifting from Nazi Germany to the Arab world. In November 1945, just half a year after the end of the Third Reich, the Muslim Brothers carried out the worst anti-Jewish pogroms in Egypt's history, when demonstrators penetrated the Jewish quarters of Cairo on the anniversary of the Balfour Declaration. They ransacked houses and shops, attacked non-Muslims, and torched the synagogues. Six people were killed, and some hundred more injured. A few weeks later the Islamists' newspapers "turned to a frontal attack against

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Egyptian Jews, slandering them as Zionists, Communists, capitalists and bloodsuckers, as pimps and merchants of war, or in general, as subversive elements within all states and societies," as Gudrun Krämer wrote in her study *The Jews in Egypt 1914-1952*.

In 1946, the Brotherhood made sure that Heinrich Himmler's friend Amin al-Husseini, the former grand mufti who was being sought as a war criminal by Britain and the United States, was granted asylum and a new lease on political life in Egypt. As leader of the Palestine National Movement, al-Husseini had been a close ally of both the Muslim Brotherhood and the Nazis. Based in Berlin from 1941 to 1945, he had directed the Muslim SS divisions in the Balkans and had been personally responsible for blocking negotiations late in the war that might have saved thousands of Jewish children from the gas chambers. All this was known in 1946. Nonetheless, Britain and the United States chose to forgo criminal prosecution of al-Husseini in order to avoid spoiling their relations with the Arab world. France, which was holding al-Husseini, deliberately let him get away.

For many in the Arab world, what amounted to amnesty for this prominent Islamic authority who had spent the war years broadcasting Nazi propaganda from Berlin was a vindication of his actions. They started to view his Nazi past with pride, not shame, and Nazi criminals on the wanted list in Europe now flooded into the Arab world. Large print-runs of the most infamous libel of the Jews, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, were published in the following decades at the behest of two well-known former members of the Muslim Brotherhood, Gamal Abdel Nasser and Anwar Sadat. Both the Muslim Brothers' unconditional solidarity with al-Husseini and their anti-Jewish riots mere months after Auschwitz show that the Brotherhood did not object, to say the least, to Hitler's attempt to exterminate the Jews of Europe.

The consequences of this attitude, this blindness to the international impact of the Holocaust, continue to affect the course of the Arab-Jewish conflict today. How do Islamists explain international support for Israel in 1947? Ignoring the actual fate of the Jews during World War II, they revert to conspiracy theories, viewing the creation of the Jewish state as a Jewish-inspired attack by the United States and the Soviet Union on the Arab world. Accordingly, El-Awaisi writes, the Brotherhood "considered the whole United Nations intervention to be an international plot carried out by the Americans, the Russians and the British, under the influence of Zionism." The mad notion of a worldwide Jewish conspiracy, suppressed in Germany since May 8, 1945, survived and flourished in the political culture of the Arab world.

In particular, Nazi-like conspiracy thinking persisted and grew. An especially striking example of its continuing influence is the charter adopted in 1988 by the Muslim Brotherhood in Palestine, better known as Hamas. In this charter—which "sounds as if it were copied from the pages of *Der Stürmer*," as Sari Nusseibeh, former PLO representative in Jerusalem, has written—Hamas defines itself as "the spearhead and the avant-garde" of the struggle against "world Zionism." The Jews, the charter explains, "were behind the French Revolution [and] the Communist Revolution. . . . They were behind World War I . . . they were behind World War II, through which they made huge financial gains by trading in armaments, and paved the way for the establishment of their state. . . . There is no war going on anywhere, without having their finger in it. . . . Their plan," states Article 32, "is embodied in *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, and their present conduct is the best proof of what we are saying."

As in the 1930s and 1940s, the sheer absurdity of the claims makes it difficult for educated people to believe that anyone could take them seriously. Nonetheless, this notion of Jews as the root of all evil continues to inspire the mass murder of civilians in Israel and to motivate the joy with which Islamists greet those murders. "Hitler's Islamic heirs," as the historian Jehuda Bauer has called the Islamists, have replaced an anticolonialism aspiring to emancipation with a Jew-hatred aspiring to salvation through the annihilation of everyone "Jewish." It should not be surprising to find Osama bin Laden accusing "the Jews" of "taking hostage America and the West"—or to find Mohamed Atta's acquaintances attributing to him a Nazi worldview. What is truly surprising is that this Islamist hatred of Jews is often overlooked by Western analysts, political actors, and media.

As noted above, the *9/11 Commission Report* is a case in point. Instead of discussing the fact that Jew-hatred had reached epidemic proportions in the Islamic world well before September 11, the report gives the impression that Islamism originally arose in response to recent American and Western policies. This is first conveyed in a remark on the early days of Islamism, when, we are told, "Fundamentalists helped articulate anticolonial grievances," an idea that ignores crucial dimensions of the outlook of the Muslim Brotherhood of the 1930s. The stereotypical message that the West is responsible is repeated in the report's analysis of bin Laden's motives: "Bin Laden's grievance with the United States may have started in reaction to specific U.S. policies but it quickly became far deeper." The report gets the history wrong. The al Qaeda leader was first politicized not by "specific U.S. policies," but by the writings of Sayyid Qutb and the jihadist lectures of Abdul-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lah Azzam. As a result, the commission's explanation of al Qaeda's appeal is one-sided: "As political, social, and economic problems created flammable societies, Bin Laden used Islam's most extreme fundamentalist traditions as his match."

It is, of course, true that Islamists seek to exploit social problems for their own ends. But Islamism is not an ideology that ignites protest as it rubs up against social injustice. On the contrary, what provokes Islamist violence is any sign of modern development in the Muslim world: scientific inquiry, political or personal self-determination, economic progress, women's equality, freedom of expression in cinema and theater. The radicalization of Islam is less the consequence of poverty and lack of opportunity than their cause.

Amin al-Husseini meets Hitler in Berlin, 1942

SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER

The refusal to see this and to recognize the substance of Islamist ideology—the death cult, the hatred of Jews, and the profound hatred of freedom—leads back again and again to the mistaken "discovery" that the "root cause" of terrorism is U.S. policies. Ultimately, the refusal to recognize al Qaeda's true motives results in a reversal of responsibility: The more deadly the terrorism, the greater the American guilt. The appeal of this approach is related to the specious hope it holds out: If suicide terrorism has its roots in U.S. policy, then a change in U.S. policy can assuage terrorism and the fear it induces. Al Qaeda, meanwhile, benefits, since the bloodier its attacks, the greater the anger against . . . the United States.

The same pattern explains the bizarre reaction to the Middle East conflict that is widespread in the West: The average observer, ignorant of the anti-Jewish content of the Hamas Charter, has to find some other explanation for terrorism against Jews, which must be—Israel. It is not the terrorists who are guilty, but their victims. Finding suicide terrorism incomprehensible, Westerners rationalize it as an act of despair that invites sympathy. *Tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner*. Here, too, following the principle of "the more barbaric the anti-Jewish terror, the greater the Israeli guilt," the bombers' victims become the scapegoat for global terrorism. The old stereotype of Jewish guilt is thus amplified in contemporary form—and only encourages the terrorists.

A struggle against Islamism waged in ignorance of Islamist ideology weakens the West. The attribution of guilt to Israel and the United States adds fuel to the flames of Islamist propaganda and drives the wedge deeper into the Western camp rather than where it belongs—in the Muslim world.

Such blindness is especially hazardous in the case of the Iranian nuclear program, whose danger arises from the unique ideological stew surrounding it: the mishmash of Jew-hatred, Holocaust denial, and Shiite death-cult messianism that is the context for Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons and advanced missiles. Here the worst-case scenario is not an increase in suicide bombing attacks against individuals, but a perhaps suicidal nuclear attack on the Israeli state. Back in Munich in 1938, many believed they could resolve the Sudeten German problem with Hitler without considering how it fit into the Nazis' overall strategy. In the same way today, in U.N. Security Council decisions and the positions of the Permanent Five, the technical aspects of Iran's nuclear program are often divorced from their ideological context.

The problem is not that the Islamists hide their goals. The problem is that the West does not listen. Osama bin Laden's chief reproach of the Americans in his "Letter to the American People" is that they act as free citizens who make their own laws instead of accepting *sharia*. The same hatred of freedom can be found in Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's letter to the American president: "Those with insight can already hear the sounds of the shattering and fall of the ideology and thoughts of the liberal democratic systems."

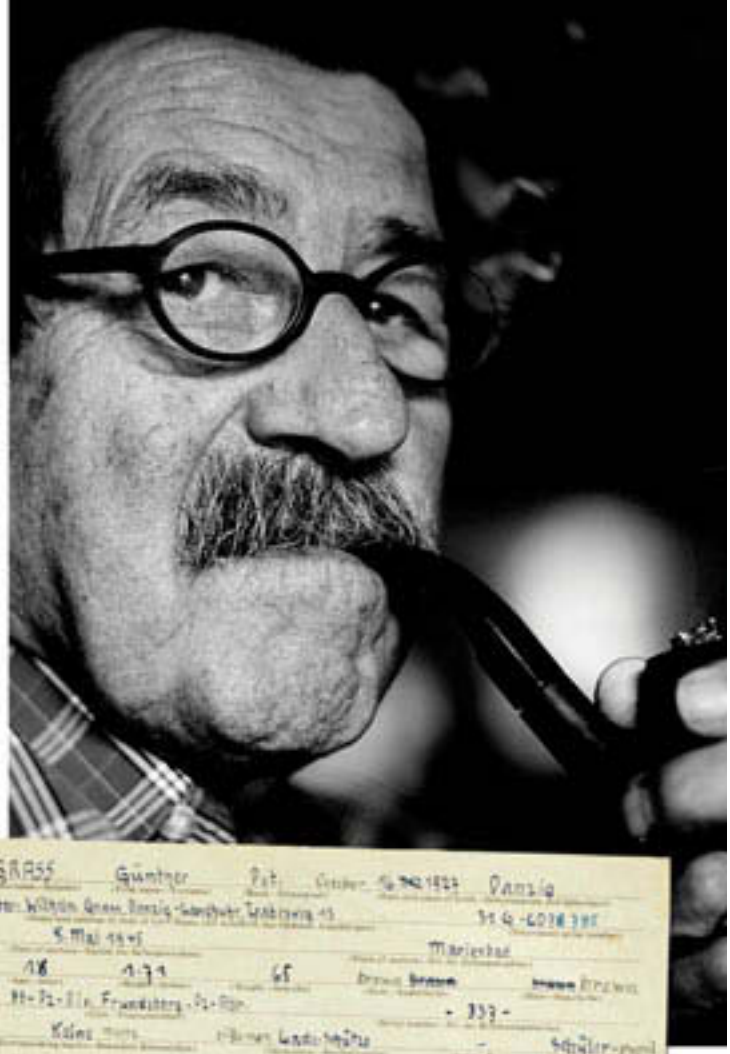
Not to confront the ideological roots of Islamism—notably its well-documented connection to Nazi Jew-hatred—stymies any Western push for political, economic, and cultural modernization in the Muslim world. Yet only such modernization can split the majority of Muslims, who would benefit from social progress, from the Islamists, who are willing to die to prevent it. Without challenging the ideological roots of Islamism, it is impossible to confront the Muslim world with the real choices before it: Will it choose life and hope, or does it prefer the cult of death? Will it stand up for individual and social self-determination, or will it finally submit to the mullahs' program of Jew-hatred and jihad? ♦

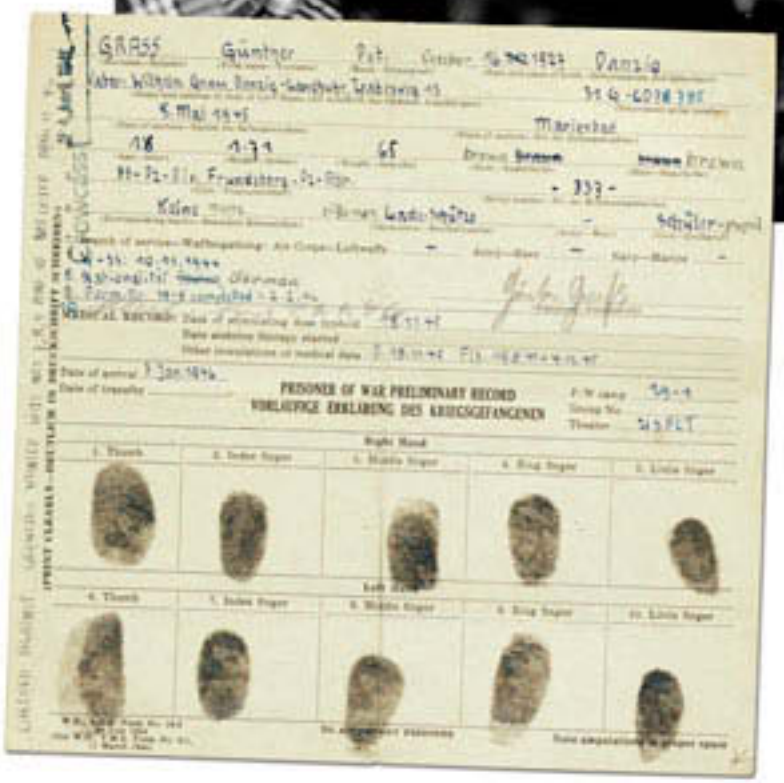
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Grass File

SS veteran, Nobel laureate, America hater

BY JEFFREY GEDMIN





I studied German literature in college and found the whole "Germany-confronts-its-past" theme riveting at the time. I read Günter Grass's *The Tin Drum*, first in English and then, dictionary in hand, slogged through the original, *Die Blechtrommel*. I must have seen Volker Schlöndorff's film version of the book three times. I later wondered, I admit, whether this was truly a great novel or, like Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha*, something that simply catches you at a certain stage of life. Over time I read other books by Grass, like *The Flounder* and *Headbirths: Or the Germans Are Dying Out*. I never felt similarly enthralled.

Peeling the Onion
by Günter Grass
Translated by
Michael Henry Heim
Harcourt, 425 pp., $26

Grass always had the reputation—in some circles, at least—of "thinking too much of the pocketbook," as a German professor friend once put it. This has been one of the many arrows slung at Grass since the publication of *Peeling the Onion* in Germany earlier this year. The major news event has not been Grass's prose or a thousand other details from this rich memoir. Rather, Grass's revelation that he was, as a young man, a member of the Waffen-SS is what has sold books, generated reviews, and put the author on leading op-ed pages.

Many of Grass's admirers were stunned, of course, by the author's revelation. Grass biographer Michael Jürgs talked to National Public Radio about his own disappointment. Some stalwarts, like John Irving, have stuck with Grass. In a column for the *Guardian* and then in an essay for the *New York Times Book Review*, Irving

Jeffrey Gedmin is president of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty.

GRASS: EYEVINE / FORM: AFP

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

claimed that Grass remains his "hero" and "moral compass."

It seems a bit of a stretch.

Grass's enemies have reveled: Grass, the self-proclaimed conscience of postwar Germany, turns out to be nothing but a hypocrite, they sing. Christopher Hitchens opined in *Slate* that one had always had the feeling that Grass "was something of a bigmouth and a fraud." It's hard to deny. In 1985, Ronald Reagan and Helmut Kohl wanted to visit a cemetery in Bitburg to honor German war dead. Forty-nine members of the Waffen-SS were also buried there, the majority young soldiers like Grass. Knowing full well the details of his own biography, Grass chose to launch a shrill, self-righteous tirade against Reagan and Kohl.

Of all the reviews I've read of *Peeling the Onion*, I admire most Timothy Garton Ash's essay in the *New York Review of Books* for its balance and restraint. Garton Ash has been one of the few to at least try to separate the literary from the political when reading Grass. Garton Ash takes Grass to task for his political failings, to be sure, but gives the author high praise for this memoir: "This memoir still stands" writes Garton Ash, "as a fine, mature work, the closing of a circle, a nonfiction companion to the incomparable *Tin Drum*."

Perhaps.

Grass recounts how his childhood came to an end when the war started in Danzig. He was 10 years old. In school he remembers a friend who seems to know more than anyone else about German losses in fighting in Norway. The friend disappears one day. His own schooling ends at the age of 15, when Grass and classmates are drafted and sent to man antiaircraft guns around the city. Grass had volunteered to be a U-Boat seaman, but had been rejected. But then, in September 1944, he was called up, sent to Berlin, and then to Dresden where he was given orders to report to the Waffen-SS.

Writes Grass: "Enough evasions. I was silent about something, which I had accepted in the stupid pride of my young years. But the burden remained and nobody could make it lighter."

In truth, I am not especially agitated by the fact that Grass was a member of the Waffen-SS. He was young, desperate to leave home, caught up in the turbulence of the time. He had absolutely nothing to do with atrocities. His hypocrisy is duly noted.

For me the greater scandal has been that Grass—a vicious anti-American with a panoply of anti-Western inclinations—should have been celebrated for so long in the first place. Grass used his literary celebrity to promote some of the most dreadful causes of our time. Most recently, he advised his friend Gerhard Schröder on ethics and foreign policy. Like Schröder, Grass was part of the moralizing no-blood-for-oil mob before the Iraq war, a group that cynically morphed its ranting against George W. Bush to a chorus of "Bush is naive for having thought Iraq is ready for democracy." All this was happening while Grass's friend Schröder got into the pipeline business with the Russian president Vladimir Putin.

During the Cold War, Grass could scarcely control his rage about America. United States foreign policy, he once insisted, was aimed at "destroying us all." There was simply no difference for Grass between the Soviets in Afghanistan and the United States in Central America. As a personal guest of the Sandinistas' secret police chief in Nicaragua, Grass once declared that he was "ashamed that his country was an ally of the United States." The Peruvian novelist Mario Vargas Llosa chastised the German writer for his views on the region: Why should a "one-party state" be the ideal for Latin America, asked Vargas Llosa. Grass, the tireless opponent of U.S. interventionism and imperialism, had made no secret of his fondness for spreading the Cuban model.

In 1989-90, Grass opposed German unification. He showed contempt for East Germans when they rejected at the polls their chance to form a "true socialist state." He had once denounced freedom-loving Poles as similarly misguided.

I wish I could read *Peeling the Onion* while separating all this out. But why should I? Grass is a hectoring and sanctimonious anti-American, with dubious commitment to liberal democracy. If he had had his way, the Nazism and totalitarianism of the right, which he so deplored, might well have been replaced by various forms of left totalitarianism. He once said that poverty in New York was akin to human rights abuses in the Soviet Union.

I figure that, if you cannot have the slightest emotional or intellectual connection to the author you are reading, why bother? That is, unless the book is assigned to you for review. Which, for the huge majority of you readers, it isn't. ♦

Lost Leader

How Tom Daschle set the stage for his own defeat.

BY JOSEPH BOTTUM

It seemed almost a miracle. Tom Daschle, the South Dakotan who rose to lead the Democrats in the Senate, performed perhaps his greatest political feat in 2002, when he worked and schemed, cajoled and threatened, and eventually dragged to victory Tim Johnson, the Democrat running for South Dakota's second Senate seat.

That 2002 race had almost everything a political junkie could want. A razor-thin finish of 524 votes. A lead for the Republican, John Thune, that

Joseph Bottum, a contributing editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, *is the editor of* First Things.

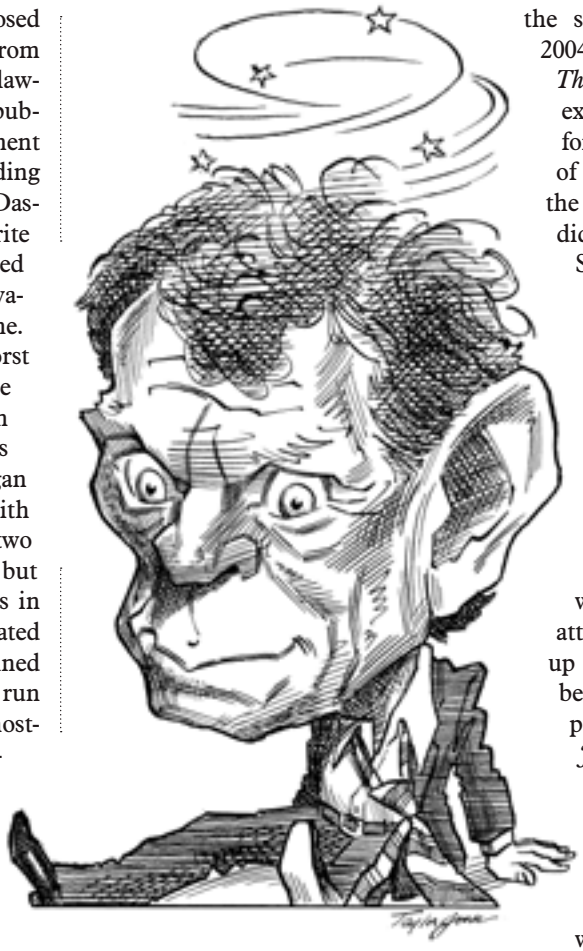
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

disappeared hours after the polls closed in a flurry of questionable ballots from the Indian reservations. A threat of lawsuits, a roar of outrage from the Republicans, a smug victory announcement from the Democrats—and presiding over it all, the elfin figure of Tom Daschle, smiling like a mischievous sprite as he coerced donations, manipulated the political machines on the reservations, and pulled his candidate home.

Funny thing: Tom Daschle's worst political *error* came during that same campaign, for it was on Election Day in 2002, as he celebrated his friend's victory, that Daschle began the campaign that would end with the loss of his own Senate seat two years later. He saved Tim Johnson, but along the way, he infuriated voters in a Republican-majority state, created a subculture of bloggers determined to bring him down, and freed to run against himself the hungriest, most-attractive young Republican candidate in the state. If Thune had beaten Johnson, Tom Daschle would still be a senator today, for the Republicans had no one else with much chance against him. Instead, Thune lost to Johnson in 2002—and then sent Daschle down to defeat in 2004.

Not that it looked likely at the time. The Daschle-Thune race was routinely cited as the most important Senate campaign of 2004, second only to the presidential race in national significance. And the question of those days was simple: If John Thune couldn't beat the weaker candidate in Johnson, how was he supposed to beat the stronger candidate in Daschle? For how he managed it, there's no better account than *Daschle vs. Thune: Anatomy of a High-Plains Senate Race*, the new study from the Sioux Falls political activist Jon K. Lauck.

Every analyst tends to push the part of the answer he knows best. Bob Mercer, for example—a reporter in Pierre and one of the state's most astute political writers—had worked as a press secretary for the four-term Republican governor Bill Janklow. And during that 2004 election, Mercer insisted on the role played by Janklow, particularly



TRIBUNE MEDIA SERVICES, INC.

Daschle vs. Thune
Anatomy of a High-Plains Senate Race
by Jon K. Lauck
Oklahoma, 304 pp., $24.95

Janklow's friendship with Daschle and the ancient rivalries between Janklow and Thune's mentor, James Abdnor (the Republican senator defeated by Daschle after Janklow had weakened him with a 1986 primary challenge).

So, for another example, David Krantz, the longtime political analyst for the state's largest paper, the Sioux Falls *Argus Leader*, repeatedly leaned toward the explanation from history and state psychology: South Dakota's unwillingness (evidenced by George McGovern's defeat by Jim Abdnor in 1980) to reelect a senator whose national importance suggests he's become more of a Washingtonian than a Dakotan.

Jon Lauck was a blogger—perhaps the state's key blogger—during the 2004 campaign, and so in *Daschle vs. Thune* he emphasizes the blogging explanation: The web provided, for the first time, a statewide source of news and commentary besides the local television stations, which did little serious reporting, and the Sioux Falls *Argus Leader*, which was widely perceived to be in Daschle's corner, both on its editorial pages and in its news coverage.

Lauck's thesis is right, and yet, it isn't. With a near monopoly as the state's only paper of record, the *Argus Leader* was unused to criticism. Much of that criticism was well deserved, and when the attacks from local blogs were picked up by national bloggers (and then began appearing in such national publications as the *Wall Street Journal* and *National Review*), the paper reacted badly, snarling, as Lauck remarks, that blogs are "places where the views of the 'pinheaded' on the 'political fringes' with 'nutty opinions' can 'spew forth.'" Indeed, the *Argus Leader*'s editor added, "If Hitler were alive today, he'd have his own blog." It all made for great Internet theater, and though they mostly spoke to readers who were already Thune supporters, the blogs certainly cost Tom Daschle some votes.

But only some. In truth, Daschle lost not because of any large factor but because each small factor cost him a handful of voters, and when they all totaled up, they amounted to a 4,508-vote win for Thune.

Daschle filed for a homestead tax credit on his $1.9 million house in Washington (which required declaring himself a permanent resident of the District of Columbia) and a few South Dakota voters decided the time had come to vote for Thune. The Republicans recaptured control of the Senate in 2002, and another small set of voters decided that Daschle's leadership wasn't needed any more. The Republican's get-out-the-vote effort failed Thune in the practice run of 2002, but

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

worked for him in 2004. Daschle's two-faced stand on legalized abortion—for it in Washington and against it in South Dakota—burned away some votes. The Democrats' failed lawsuit to ban Republican poll-watchers on the reservations alienated a few more.

And bit by bit, county by county, Daschle's margin of victory dribbled away. The details of Thune's election are all present here, down to the exact length (29 seconds) of Daschle's 3:00 A.M. telephone call conceding defeat. Through the central chapters of the book, Jon Lauck has written what should be required reading for anyone interested in how to win—and how to lose—a modern senatorial campaign.

Apart from that, however, who gives a hoot any more about Tom Daschle's lost chances? We're almost three years past the election, John Thune is now an accepted figure in the Republican party, and without a Senate majority leader from the state, national interest in South Dakota politics has dropped to its usual level: somewhere between nearly nonexistent and completely nonexistent.

Lauck clearly recognizes the why-bother aspect of his work, and he devotes a concluding chapter to what he calls "Daschle versus Thune as Synecdoche," a big-think attempt to tie the campaign to the struggle between the 1970s left and the 1980s right—the decades-long battle between the followers of George McGovern and the forces of Ronald Reagan. In the end, Daschle's attempts to pose himself as a Reagan Democrat at home and a McGovern Democrat in Washington were doomed—in part, Lauck argues—because there is no peace to be made between the two camps. In the long tide of American political history, one side must lose.

That's right, and yet, again, it isn't. Thune won the election, after all, and if his victory is a synecdoche for a general trend in American politics, then we have no explanation for the results of the next national election, in 2006, when McGovernism came roaring back. Lauck adds an epilogue that admits the point, but can't quite bring himself to see that it requires a complete rethinking of his thesis.

Still, *Daschle vs. Thune* is a model for tight, detailed election coverage—even if so many of the figures it details are fading with astonishing speed. Tim Johnson has suffered a stroke and remains too ill for his full Senate duties. Bill Janklow, driving at his usual reckless rate, plowed a borrowed car into a motorcyclist and resigned his House seat when manslaughter charges were filed. Tom Daschle seems to have settled back on the comfortable income he and his wife make as Washington lobbyists. Where are the politicians of yesteryear?

Tom Daschle is one of the figures who dominated politics in South Dakota for a generation. But hunted down at last by Hubris, the avenging spirit that waits hungrily to punish arrogance, they are all gone now, victims of the very things that made them so successful. To read *Daschle vs. Thune* is to understand why the best response is: Good riddance. ♦

Woman of Letters

Can Willa Cather be saved from her academic admirers? BY JAMES SEATON

When Joan Acocella surveyed criticism on Willa Cather in *Willa Cather and the Politics of Criticism* (2000), a little book based on her much-discussed 1995 *New Yorker* article "Willa Cather and the Academy," she found Cather studies in a state of disrepair.

The Cambridge Companion to Willa Cather
Edited by Marilee Lindemann
Cambridge, 254 pp., $24.99

In both her article and subsequent book, Acocella argued that it was the politicization of academic criticism on Cather that accounted for the failure of contemporary critics to illuminate either the wisdom or the aesthetic achievement of Willa Cather. Acocella, it should be emphasized, did not demand that the literary criticism of Cather or anybody else become a politics-free zone; her objection to the current influential views of Cather was "not that they contain politics, but that they contain almost nothing else."

The Cambridge Companion to Willa Cather is clearly meant as a response to Acocella, a demonstration that her thesis was misconceived from the beginning, and today more wrong than ever. It is true that the editor, Marilee Lindemann, previously provided inadvertent support for Acocella's thesis in her own "rethinking" and "reassessment" of what is often considered Cather's greatest novel, *My Ántonia*. Lindemann began that essay by observing that she had previously "avoided working on" *My Ántonia* because she had been "distracted and annoyed by the insipidness of its narrator, Jim Burden."

Lindemann still didn't like Jim, but she was now able to see both the novel and its narrator in a new and relevant way: "Jim Burden now strikes me as the narrative equivalent of the Senate Judiciary Committee listening in the fall of 1991 to Professor Anita Hill's testimony about Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas." It was clear to Lindemann that "Jim's narrative is as racked by ideological pressures and discursive uncertainties as the . . . Senate hearings"; thus "Ántonia functions for Jim much as Anita Hill functioned for the inept yet powerful senators."

The message of the novel in her new interpretation is no longer mysterious

James Seaton is professor of English at Michigan State.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but straightforwardly political: "*My Ántonia* thus allegorizes the extreme precariousness of women's claims to power and property. . . . On Cather's prairie as on Capitol Hill, a woman speaks, but men retain the power to transcribe, interpret, and render judgment upon her words."

Lindemann was right to caution readers that her "reading of the novel will no doubt seem to have demonized Jim Burden and perversely turned Cather's elegy of pioneer life into a paranoid feminist allegory on the evils of male authority."

In Lindemann's introduction, "Cather's place in contemporary cultural politics" is best demonstrated by the efforts of Laura Bush, who "featured [Cather's] work as part of a White House symposium on the literary legacy of women in the American West in September, 2002." Laura Bush, like Joan Acocella, wanted the discussion of Cather to focus on literature rather than politics, but Lindemann was not fooled. The choice of Sharon O'Brien, one of Lindemann's critical allies, as a keynote speaker, and the invitation of Lindemann herself, as well as other contributors to the *Companion*, might have suggested that politics was not considered in selecting the guests.

Lindemann, however, found the "mere presence" of Lynne Cheney among the invitees a reminder "that literature and literary criticism—and the arts and humanities generally—are deeply political." Lynne Cheney, after all, is "a well-known conservative culture warrior," whose bad faith is demonstrated, according to Lindemann, by her attempt "to discredit postmodernism by associating it with moral relativism," a charge apparently credible only to other "conservative culture warriors."

Lindemann disposes of Lynne Cheney to her own satisfaction, but it turns out that Laura Bush has another, more formidable ally: Willa Cather herself. Lindemann gamely acknowledges that

> Willa Cather might well have agreed with Laura Bush's assertion about American literature being apolitical, and she probably would have been delighted to have been read and celebrated in a White House occupied by conservative Texans. She was a lifelong Republican whose fiction avoided overt political crusading and can be construed to uphold a traditional American value system of hard work and rugged individualism.

Willa Cather

KATHERINE EASTLAND / THE WEEKLY STANDARD

Essays in the *Companion* offer two ways of dealing with what one might call "the Willa Cather problem" in Cather studies. The first is to not merely acknowledge but insist that Cather was a conservative and then write essays "calling her to the dock to answer whether she is as good as the critic," as Acocella puts it. The second alternative is to argue that Cather was not really so conservative. Wasn't she a lesbian, after all, and a proto-feminist, and maybe even some sort of political progressive?

Lindemann inclines to the first alternative, as her approach to *My Ántonia* indicates. She notes approvingly that Leona Sevick's contribution on "Catholic expansionism and the politics of depression in *Death Comes for the Archbishop*" takes the novel's protagonist down a peg or two, reading "Cather's archbishop as a modern neurasthenic, subject to periods of depression and alienation." The lesson Sevick draws from *Death Comes for the Archbishop* is a good example of that reading "against the grain of Cather's escapism" championed by Lindemann:

> Just as the historical Catholic Church's seeming alliance with the working man helped to promote the aims of an exploitative capitalist culture, so the bourgeois retreat into Catholicism as a means of combating its neurasthenia implicitly promoted the very consumer culture it sought to avoid.

Lisa Marcus, in a contribution entitled "Willa Cather and the geography of Jewishness," does her bit to combat both "the First Lady's appropriation of a bland, antiseptic Cather" and "Joan Acocella's reactionary crusade to cleanse Cather criticism of ideology." Marcus counterposes Cather's "ambivalent response to an increasingly Jewish New York" to her celebra-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion in novels like *My Ántonia* of what Marcus characterizes as "heroic images of white European immigrants settling the American West (that image that the Bush White House could so comfortably celebrate)."

Meanwhile, in "The Cather thesis," Joseph Urgo argues that a close reading of the fiction reveals that the personal aspirations of all Cather's characters are somehow affirmations of imperialism. In Urgo's words, "The cultural logic of imperialism suggested by Willa Cather implicates every American gesture towards individual distinction as contributing to American empire." Thus the artistic achievement of Thea Kronberg in *The Song of the Lark* makes her "the textual personification of empire."

The second approach—to suggest that, despite all the evidence to the contrary, Cather shared the leftist politics of the critic—is exemplified by Guy Reynolds's contribution: "Willa Cather as progressive: politics and the writer." In his attempt to find evidence for Cather's "Midwestern radical vision," Reynolds looks for signs of progressivism in the most unlikely places. The protagonist of *Death Comes for the Archbishop* may be a "neurasthenic" to Leona Sevick, but to Reynolds he is a progressive who carries out a "steady reforming mission."

What is important about Tom Outland in *The Professor's House* is not his communion with the ancient world of Cliff City but the "scientific progressivism" Reynolds associates with "his design for a jet engine." Alexandra Bergson's plan in *O Pioneers!* to improve the family farm "blends a Populist's fear of rural ruin with a Progressive's desire to move forward through the application of rationality and scientism."

Understandably, Reynolds does not mention the real populists—Alexandra's brother Lou and Frank Shabata—in *O Pioneers!* The narrator comments that "the trouble with Lou is that he is tricky, and his neighbors have found out that . . . he has not a fox's face for nothing. Politics being the natural field for such talents, he neglects his farm to attend conventions and to run for county office." Lou thinks it would be a good idea to "march down to Wall Street and blow it up," but Carl Linstrum's reply is supported by Alexandra's own farm and the book as a whole: "But what have you fellows out here got to kick about? . . . One only has to drive through this country to see that you're all as rich as barons."

The only character who shares Lou's ideas is Frank Shabata, who murders his wife and Alexandra's brother when he finds them together. Frank Shabata, the narrator observes, "was always reading about the doings of rich people and feeling outraged. . . . Frank and Lou Bergson had very similar ideas, and they were two of the political agitators of the county."

Susan J. Rosowski argues persuasively that My Ántonia *may be seen as "one of the great comic narratives of American literature."*

The *Companion* includes two essays on *My Ántonia*. Anne E. Goldman's "Rereading *My Ántonia*" exemplifies the approach Joan Acocella had in mind when she observed that "Some writers are willing to give [Cather] points on one scale, but not on another. One might say 'Cather was good on women, or pretty good, but she was bad on empire,' while another might condemn her political conservatism but praise her as 'a friend to gay rights.'"

Goldman faults *My Ántonia* for supporting "a conservative reading of American political life," but she praises Cather for her "insistence on representing middle-aged women . . . the people most consistently under-represented across a wide range of arts." Objecting to Cather's affirmation of American society in general, Goldman gives Cather points for at least bringing out the "suffocating quality of small town life." She seems to be intending to praise one of the great novels of American literature by claiming that, in the episodes depicting the small town of Black Hawk, it "resembles filmic satires of suburban life such as *The Stepford Wives* or *American Beauty*."

The late Susan J. Rosowski's essay "Willa Cather and the comic sense of self" is something else again. Lindemann writes in the introduction that Rosowski "turns in a surprisingly different direction for her discussion of Cather's aesthetic principles." And it is, indeed, surprising to find in this anthology an essay that objects to "the general tendency to treat fiction as a psychobiographical document" and suggests "we return to [the] aesthetic principles underlying Cather's art."

Taking as her epigraph George Santayana's dictum that "Everything in Nature is lyrical in its ideal essence, tragic in its fate, and comic in its existence," Rosowski argues persuasively that *My Ántonia* may be seen as "one of the great comic narratives of American literature." Rosowski clarifies her conception of the comic perspective by a comparison with the tragic view of life:

> Whereas tragedy celebrates the heroic of a great but doomed assertion of ego, comedy celebrates the capacity of human beings to lose themselves in the regenerative and adaptive rhythm of life. Whereas tragedy features a consolidation of self, comedy requires a blurred, indeterminate sense of self.

Whereas Lindemann is "annoyed" by the "insipidness" of the narrator, Rosowski sees that the stories Jim tells on himself express the "expansive comic spirit" of the novel, so that when Jim finally visits Ántonia after 20 years, "The expansive spirit of self-negligence means that Jim fully accepts Ántonia as she is" and, likewise, "Jim fully accepts in himself the follies of his youth." Rosowski praises Cather for expressing the "comic spirit" which she identifies, in a gesture unique in the *Companion*, with the American spirit:

> Cather confirmed principles of comedy for herself and for America when she wrote *My Ántonia*: of finding faith in the life spirit's adaptability, and flexibility; of celebrat-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> ing that faith with full knowledge of individual mortality; of blurring boundaries between the self and the not-self and, in doing so, fully accepting one's own identity.

Rosowski's success in making use of George Santayana's vision to gain insights into Cather's fiction suggests the possibility of other parallels between the world views of the philosopher and the fiction writer. When Godfrey St. Peter, the historian who is the protagonist of *The Professor's House*, tells his class that "Art and religion . . . are the same thing, in the end, of course," he is repeating Santayana's thesis that "religion and poetry are identical in essence, and differ merely in the way in which they are attached to practical affairs."

Santayana's point about the virtual identity of art and religion is not only explicitly supported by St. Pierre but borne out by the ancient Cliff City explored by Tom Outland in the same novel. The remains of Cliff City architecture reveal what the priest Father Duchene calls a "natural yearning for order and security" that, the text makes clear, is satisfied by both art and religion. The archbishop of *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, Father Latour, could not, of course, admit an identity between the two realms, but at some level he feels the affinity: "As he had a very special way of handling objects that were sacred, he extended that manner to things which he considered beautiful."

Many readers of *My Ántonia* cannot understand why Jim Burden does not want to marry Ántonia but is taken up with the "idea" of her. About to leave Ántonia for two decades, he tells her "The idea of you is a part of my mind; you influence my likes and dislikes, all my tastes, hundreds of times when I don't realize it. You really are a part of me."

Santayana would have understood. In his autobiography, he describes "a change of heart" he went through around the age of 30, as he came to realize that "to possess things and persons in idea is the only pure good to be got out of them; to possess them physically or legally is a burden and a snare." The hero of Santayana's novel *The Last Puritan*, Oliver Alden, comes to the same awareness only after his marriage proposals are rejected by two women:

> Now affection and kindness are all that I have felt or ever ought to feel about the real Rose, or about the real Edith . . . my image of them in being detached from their accidental persons, will be clarified in itself, will become truer to my profound desire, and the inspiration of a profound desire, fixed upon some lovely image, is what is called love. And the true lover's tragedy is not being jilted; it is being accepted.

Willa Cather would seem to agree: The happy marriages in her fiction, like that of Ántonia and Anton Cuzak, or Anton and Mary Rosicky, are indeed expressions of "affection and kindness," not the sort of idealization of another that Jim Burden instinctively (and Oliver Alden eventually) both realize cannot be fulfilled except by absence.

Early in *My Ántonia*, the young Jim Burden falls asleep in a pumpkin patch, "entirely happy." The adult Jim Burden muses that "Perhaps we feel like that when we die and become a part of something entire, whether it is sun and air, or goodness and knowledge." He concludes his reflections with a line that is engraved on Willa Cather's tombstone: "At any rate, that is happiness; to be dissolved into something complete and great."

This acceptance of dissolution is part of what Susan Rosowski has in mind in finding a link between Santayana's philosophy and the comic view she finds in Cather's fiction, especially *My Ántonia*. The comic perspective blurs "distinctions between the self and the not-self." The comic spirit accepts "individual mortality" with "full knowledge" but does not regard one's own end as tragic because it is capable of finding a continuity beyond the individual self. The philosopher who sees things "under the form of eternity" sees a continuity beyond his own life: "A man who understands himself under the form of eternity . . . knows that he cannot wholly die . . . for when the movement of his life is over, the truth of his life remains. The fact of him is a part for ever of the infinite context of facts."

Cold comfort, perhaps. But Willa Cather's fiction suggests that it is not only philosophers who are able to see death, including one's own, as something other than a tragedy. Jim Burden is one witness; death as continuity is perhaps affirmed most lyrically in Cather's fiction in the last sentence of *O Pioneers!* which tells the story of Alexandra Bergson: "Fortunate country, that is one day to receive hearts like Alexandra's into its bosom, to give them out again in the yellow wheat, in the rustling corn, in the shining eyes of youth!"

These parallels between the fiction of Willa Cather and the philosophy of George Santayana are not meant to suggest that the key to Cather's fiction, if such a key were possible or even desirable, could be found in Santayana's ideas. They are meant to suggest that a vision of the world of the quality and depth found in the work of Willa Cather is perhaps best understood when interrogated with the assistance of minds—like Santayana's—whose works reveal a similar quality and depth.

Unfortunately, with some outstanding exceptions, such as the work of Susan Rosowski, much of the recent criticism on Willa Cather renounces any assistance except what is provided by the dominant academic trends, so that a large part of contemporary Cather studies amounts to, as Joan Acocella puts it, "the interrogation of this author as to whether her views were sufficiently antipatriarchal, anticolonial, antihegemonic."

In her introduction to the *Companion*, Marilee Lindemann responds to Acocella, and those who share her sense that contemporary criticism has distorted and diminished Cather's literary reputation, by asserting: "I am pleased to offer this volume as a way of saying that the patient is doing very well, thank you, and the doctors are justifiably proud of their efforts."

The image of contemporary critics as "doctors" and Willa Cather as the "patient" reveals all too much about the state of Cather studies today. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In the Trenches

A descent into Kansas City's National World War I Museum. **BY ANDREW FERGUSON**

In 1917 and 1918, while World War I raged across Europe, the citizens of Kansas City, Missouri, raised more than $2 million to support the war effort. Bad luck, though: The horrific slaughter ended too soon to disburse the money.

What to do? A less generous citizenry might have simply redistributed the money among themselves. Kansas Citians decided to hold an architectural contest. The winner would design a memorial to those who had died in the war—which was, of course, the war that would end all wars while making the world safe for democracy. The memorial the city ended up with, called the Liberty Memorial, is a limestone obelisk rising from a shadeless plaza of paving stones, guarded east and west by a pair of sphinx. Set atop one of the highest hills in town, directly across from the then-bustling train station, the memorial was something that no one, visitor or resident, could miss. It's survived as a touching, ungainly curiosity of the kind you find in older, midsized Midwestern cities, where enthusiasm, good intentions, and cash on hand always won out over modesty and understatement.

With the opening several months ago of a stunning museum devoted to the First World War, this interesting spot in Kansas City has become even more interesting. Together, the new museum, so clearly a product of our age, and the memorial above it, so clearly a product of its own time, present a tidy contrast in how war and our history have been understood from those days to these, and not only in Kansas City.

The Liberty Memorial, 1926

The National World War One Museum sits in a vault hollowed out beneath the plaza from which the Liberty Memorial obelisk rises. It was designed by Ralph Appelbaum Associates, the New York firm responsible for the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia, the Civil War Visitor's Center in Richmond, and others too many to list. Over the last 20 years Appelbaum has become to history museums what Ken Burns has become to history shows on PBS: the creator and keeper of a house style, a set of mannerisms and techniques that infects anyone who works in the same line.

A museum designed by Appelbaum or one of his many imitators is easy to identify. It's a cavernous space, usually, with high ceilings opened up to expose the pipes and air conditioning ducts, which are painted flat-black, giving the effect of a looming night sky. Pinpoint lighting splashes the unfinished concrete floor with overlapping pools of light. Video screens jump with images in the general gloom—maps and film clips—and disembodied voices ring out from hidden speakers. There's a lot going on at once. In contrast to the sedate, Euclidian style of earlier museums, Appelbaum creates a jumbled environment for the current generation of the chronically overstimulated. Think of the riotous interior of Best Buy or Circuit City.

But the Box Store aesthetic is only at the surface of the Appelbaum style. Look closer, and you see how much he relies on the elements of a traditional museum. He has none of the postmodern aversion to fact and storytelling. Where academic historians might reject narrative and even chronology as artificial impositions on a messy and endlessly refractable reality, Appelbaum builds his museums around a solid chronological spine. A giant story board, full of names and dates, will curve along the outer wall or unspool in a kind of scroll at the core of the museum. This establishes a narrative and pulls the visitor through the story from month to month, event to event, cause to effect. Radiating out from the story board are rooms and vestibules that treat some particular episode or item of interest in greater depth, using lots of wall text (though seldom in doses larger than a paragraph at a time) and illustrated with countless artifacts,

Andrew Ferguson, a senior editor at THE WEEKLY STANDARD, *is the author, most recently, of* Land of Lincoln: Adventures in Abe's America.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

displayed like jewels.

Appelbaum's emphasis on story and stuff, artifacts and chronology, accounts for the popular success his museums enjoy, and so it is in Kansas City. It's surprising to see how slowly visitors make their way through the National Museum, and encouraging to see how much history they can take in as they do. Young boys, especially, linger before glass cases stacked with rifles and knives and grenades and look longingly at the howitzers that rest just out of reach beyond velvet ropes. The other day, during my visit, kids and grown-ups alike clustered around animated maps that trace the bloody back-and-forth across the Meuse and through the Belleau Wood. Here and there a window in a vestibule invites you to peer through, and when you do, you look into a life-sized re-creation of a trench at the edge of no-man's land, the dim figures huddled against the rain or trudging by on planks half-buried in mud.

There's no end to the dazzling effects—even when you wish there were. A modern high-tech museum must be harder to maintain than a theme park (which it resembles). During my visit, several digital-dependent displays involving infra-red light wands and interactive email programs were on the blink, if that's still the technical term for "broken." And sometimes the cleverness runs away with the story altogether. The floor of one gallery is laid in glass, below which an extended quotation has been painted, blood-red letters six inches high glaring up from a black background. It's almost impossible to read, but if you try you'll find yourself staring at the floor and moving sideways and then lengthwise to take it in. And it's a good quotation, too—a vivid battlefield description from Ernst Jünger's classic *Storm of Steel*—and almost worth the trouble of bumping into half-a-dozen other museumgoers who are staring at the floor and moving sideways across your path.

In the museum's portrayal of WWI, scarcely a single decision or single act of an individual human being is mentioned. It's history without actors, and therefore without heroes or villains. And therefore without honor or sacrifice or meaning.

'A glass bridge over a field of a thousand poppies.'

PHOTOS: NATIONAL WORLD WAR I MUSEUM AT LIBERTY MEMORIAL

Still, something's missing amid all the words, the artifacts, and the technical magic, and what's gone is felt most dramatically when you remember where you are, in a vault beneath a 217-foot high memorial built shortly after the war to the honor and sacrifice of the men who fought in it and were changed by it forever.

Here in the museum there are no individuals, no identifiable persons of flesh and blood (even the dim figures in the trench are faceless). The introductory video tries to explain the origins of the war, and while an older approach to history might trace them to the insecurity of the kaiser, the fumbling of the czar, the vanity of Clemenceau, the haplessness of King George, and the stupidity and misjudgment of them all, Appelbaum's museum shows the war as the grinding collision of vast forces, impersonal and implacable: imperialism and nationalism, capitalism and prosperity, immigration and technology. The visitor is left with the idea that the war was an inevitable consequence of these juggernauts moving through time like tectonic plates—senseless and insensible. Scarcely a single decision or single act of an individual human being is mentioned. It's history without actors, and therefore without heroes or villains. And therefore without honor or sacrifice or meaning.

Outside, approaching the Liberty Memorial, a visitor ascends: You rise up a sweeping staircase, then up another to the top of the obelisk. You are meant to rise up; that's the point. All around are tributes carved in stone to "God's gentle angels who bound our wounds and healed our troubled spirits," heartbreaking reminders of "those who have dared bear the torches of sacrifice and service."

"Their bodies," says one, "return to dust but their work liveth forever more."

Entering the National Museum of World War One, a visitor descends: A tunnel takes you below the memorial and into the gathering gloom across a glass bridge over a field of a thousand poppies. Because the war that's depicted here, below ground, is pointless, the tone is relentlessly funereal. There's no room for valor. Appelbaum

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and his attending historians may not be postmodernists, but they fully share the postmodern rejection of uplift and exhortation. They'll tell a story so long as there's no moral attached—which, I suppose, is a moral in itself.

It does raise the question, though: How could the survivors of the First World War—who knew firsthand its cost in wealth and blood—muster a sense of reverence, even of triumph, from the experience, while we who are so distant from it cannot? You'd think it would be the other way around, that the memory would get gauzier and more sentimental with the passage of time. And isn't there something impertinent in our refusal these days to celebrate the sacrifice, even in a museum? It's as though we think we understand the experience of these earlier generations better than they did themselves. On what authority do we deliver such a rebuke? With what standing do we make those Kansas Citians of 80 years ago seem like victims of their own sentimentality—like chumps?

Today's Kansas City is understandably proud of its new museum. It was built, like the memorial above, with funds raised through the generosity of the residents themselves. But leaving it (ascending again), I wondered what the older Kansas Citians would have made of it. How surprised they would be to discover that their tribute to sacrifice and valor has, by their grandchildren and great-grandchildren, been hollowed out—literally, of course, but figuratively too. ♦

O Newfoundland

The province where Edward Hopper's paintings come alive. **BY ROBERT WHITCOMB**

The Iambics of Newfoundland
Notes from an Unknown Shore
by Robert Finch
Counterpoint, 270 pp., $26

Basque, French, Portuguese, English, and Irish folk started settling Newfoundland in the late 16th century and started visiting (as fishermen) at least a hundred years before that. Well prior to that, albeit briefly, came the Vikings. Still, most of the huge island remains unpopulated, and most of the "indigenous population" is long gone. Actually, Newfoundland still seems more a remote part of Europe than an adjunct of North America.

English West Country and Irish accents and diction (and in some places a bit of French) created the province's sometimes incomprehensible dialect, including such delightful place names as *Squid Tickle* and such words as *gallinippers*. Partly as a result of the language, and of inhabitants' rough-hewn ways, Newfoundland has long been mocked by other Canadians, who are pleased to tell one "dumb Newfie" joke after another, as people in the Northeast used (?) to tell "Canuck" jokes about Québécois. (The trick, as we go through life, is to just keep passing on the insults to the next available group.)

But Robert Finch is determined—in this lovely, frequently funny, and sometimes sad book of essays—to demonstrate the essential dignity of the islanders, in a work that recalls the Rockwell Kent classic *N by E*. The only main flaw is the lack of pictures, including maps of this mysterious region. Another overly budget-conscious publisher?

Newfoundland seems to inhabit some sort of version of the 1930s or '40s. The inhabitants' lives are considerably more elemental than most Americans'—they have a lot less stuff—and their brightly colored frame houses from the outside (and inside, if you ignore the ubiquitous TV sets) evoke, as Finch notes, Edward Hopper paintings. (Finch says Hopper would have particularly loved the province's physically spectacular—if seemingly fire-trap—capital and major port, St. John's.)

The Newfies, while "rustic" and/or "quaint," aren't stupid. They're damn good survivors, managing to hang on to their gritty culture, even as much of its economic basis—fishing—has collapsed. They hunt for moose and caribou, they mend, they fish for squid instead of cod, and, if need be, they go to work in the skyscrapers of Toronto or the oil sands of Alberta. And, Finch says, they maintain a "lateral" sense of history and storytelling, wherein something that happened 150 years ago gets all jumbled with something that happened a decade ago. It's an astonishingly oral culture, and one so old that, in many places, the "native" population *succeeded* the European one.

Despite the province's economic woes, the vast and eerie beauty of this cold and windy land, and the warmth of its extended families, still draw back its many economic exiles. Clearly, Finch, who lives in Massachusetts most of the time, is also smitten.

Most of Newfoundland is forest, moor, lake, rocky headland, and even semi-tundra; but the ironic and often fatalistic population are the real subjects of this book, which holds out hope—for travel writers, anyway—that some places in the West can fend off, for a remarkably long time, the forces of commercial homogenization. But then, as one young Newfie described her home to Finch: "This is the end of the world, y' know." ♦

Robert Whitcomb, editor of the editorial pages at the Providence Journal, *is the coauthor of* Cape Wind: Money, Celebrity, Class, Politics, and the Battle for Our Energy Future on Nantucket Sound.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

William Deedes, 1913-2007

With his death, a species of journalist is extinct.

BY ALEXANDER CHANCELLOR

The *Daily Telegraph* that Bill Deedes edited from 1974 to 1986—the year in which Conrad Black bought the newspaper and ousted him—was an institution that would be unimaginable today, and one that must have already seemed antediluvian to its thrusting new Canadian proprietor.

Sir William (later Lord) Deedes, who died last month at the age of 94, two days after starting (but failing to complete) his latest weekly column for a paper to which he had been linked for 70 years, would never, in any event, have worked for Black, whom he once described to a colleague as "the biggest bore on earth." As a modest, diffident man, with a deep distrust of ideology, Deedes would have hated Black's dogmatism and grandiloquence.

He was at ease, however, in his role as principal courtier to a man even more diffident than himself—the man who was forced to sell the *Telegraph* to Black, the late Lord Hartwell. Hartwell, the last member of the Berry dynasty to own and manage the newspaper, was so shy that he, as far as possible, avoided personal contact with his staff.

But he was also, as both proprietor and self-styled "editor-in-chief," the undisputed boss, and he was treated by Deedes with a deference bordering on sycophancy. In the unique command structure created by the Berry family, the person holding the title of "editor" only ran the opinion section of the paper; the news pages were controlled independently by a "managing editor."

So Deedes was effectively only half an editor and, furthermore, a half that would never challenge his proprietor or publish anything that he thought would not meet with his approval. Apart from pleasing Hartwell, his main purposes were to keep his journalists calm and contented and to avoid confrontations.

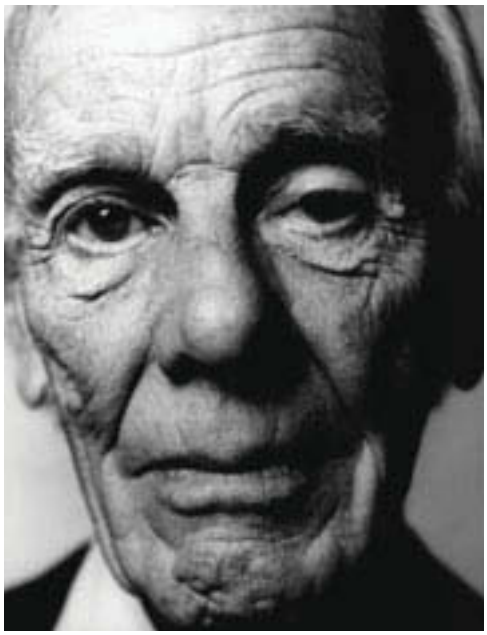
"I have never given an order, and I never will," he boasted to one of them.

He seemed thus to possess few of the qualities required of a man in his position, and his editorship also coincided with a period of deepening crisis that culminated in the loss of the newspaper to Black. This was not Deedes's fault, except to the extent that he failed to impress on Hartwell the need for radical changes to avert the financial collapse brought on by the rapacity of the print unions.

He would have thought it disloyal to question his boss's judgement on any matter; and he was, anyway, something of a fatalist. Deedes said, after joining Harold Macmillan's foundering Conservative government in 1962, "A sinking ship is my spiritual home."

Abandoning politics to rejoin the *Telegraph* as editor, he found himself aboard another sinking ship and did little to help keep it afloat. For his journalists, it was a happy time of gentlemanly discourse and convivial drinking in Fleet Street pubs; but for their once dynamic newspaper, it was twilight time.

Given what happened to the *Telegraph* on Deedes's watch, it might be thought surprising that his death prompted a huge outpouring of praise and affection throughout the British media—even in newspapers of the left that had little sympathy for his old-fashioned, paternalistic conservatism. The Labour prime minister, Gordon Brown, said Britain owed Deedes "a huge debt of gratitude," and that "few have served journalism and the British people for so long at such a high level of distinction." Margaret Thatcher called him "a dear friend" who had had "a uniquely distinguished career in politics and journalism."



CORBIS

The last survivor of a golden age of Fleet Street, an age in which newspapers, flush with money, could tolerate eccentricity and waywardness among their staffs.

Alexander Chancellor, former editor of the Spectator, *now writes for the* Guardian, *and is the author, most recently, of* Some Times in America.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The length of his journalistic career was, in itself, remarkable. Born into wealth and privilege and sent to Harrow, he was taken away from school at 16 when his father was ruined by the 1929 stock market crash and found a job as a cub reporter on the *Morning Post*, a conservative paper that was later to be subsumed, together with Deedes, by the *Daily Telegraph*. It was the *Morning Post* that sent him on his first major assignment in 1935 to cover the war in Abyssinia, where he was to meet Evelyn Waugh, who was representing the *Daily Mail* there, and inadvertently inspire him to create the character of William Boot, the bumbling hero of his 1938 satirical novel, *Scoop*.

In *Scoop*, Boot arrives in Africa with an absurdly large amount of equipment, including cleft-sticks for sending messages; in real life, the young Deedes, wearing a double-breasted, pinstripe suit, brought with him 600 pounds of luggage that included different riding boots for winter and summer.

As a reporter, Deedes went on to cover Neville Chamberlain's fateful meeting with Hitler in Bad Godesberg in 1938 and—after fighting in the war and being decorated for bravery—returned to the *Telegraph* and continued to write for it for the rest of his life, even during his 24 years as a Conservative member of parliament.

After losing the editorship, he was immediately hired by his successor as a columnist and roving reporter; and well into his nineties he traveled the world as a crusading journalist, at one point going with Princess Diana to Angola in support of her campaign against antipersonnel mines. He was a crisp and elegant writer and, at 84, was the oldest person ever to win a "Reporter of the Year" award. But it is not these accomplishments that explain the surge of nostalgia that greeted the news of his death.

It is his status as the last survivor of a golden age of Fleet Street, an age in which newspapers, flush with money, could tolerate eccentricity and waywardness among their staffs; an age of liquid lunches and lazy afternoons in which journalists were forgiven everything, provided their copy was good and appeared on time. Gathered together in one street, before their newspapers were dispersed around London, journalists shared an *esprit de corps* that overrode their rivalries, and a belief that theirs was the most exciting and liberating way of life.

Bill Deedes was not just a huge enthusiast for this world, who liked a drink and smoked cigarettes from a cigarette holder; he was also a man of great modesty and amiability, who took public transportation rather than taxis, ate in cheap restaurants, treated everyone as equals, befriended the young, and made friends wherever he went.

He also believed that journalism should never be nasty. "We don't want to hurt anybody," he told the editor of the *Telegraph*'s gossip column. These are some of the reasons he is mourned. ♦

She'll Take Manhattan

Who would have thought we'd yearn for Charles Bronson? **BY JOHN PODHORETZ**

The Brave One is a new movie with Jodie Foster that bears more than a passing resemblance to the 1974 movie with Charles Bronson called *Death Wish*. I say "more than a passing resemblance" because I don't want to use the word "plagiarism." (Oops.)

The Brave One has the same Upper West Side setting as *Death Wish*. It has the same plotline, as an effete upscale liberal New Yorker (Bronson an architect, Foster a public-radio broadcaster) decides to take violent revenge against the city's criminals after a loved one is murdered by a gang of young thugs. (Bronson's wife is murdered and his daughter viciously beaten, while Foster's boyfriend is murdered and *she* is viciously beaten.) It has the same dramatic conflict, as a good New York City cop (Vincent Gardenia in the old one, Terrence Howard in the new one) acts as the sympathetic but stern voice of the law.

The Brave One
Directed by Neil Jordan

The Brave One really ought to be a better movie than *Death Wish*. After all, Jodie Foster is a greater actor than Bronson ever was. The director of *The Brave One*, Neil Jordan, is a vastly more accomplished and thoughtful filmmaker (*The Crying Game*, *Breakfast on Pluto*) than *Death Wish*'s vulgarian Michael Winner.

And yet *Death Wish* remains a crackling classic, while *The Brave One* is a lugubrious disaster.

To take the most obvious problem, *Death Wish* was made at a time when New York City was awash in random violent crime—and at a time when the rising tide of crime was a consuming preoccupation for everyone in the country. *Death Wish*'s portrait of a city gone bad, a city in which the authorities no longer know how to protect citizens from criminals and don't even seem to care very much, may have been melodramatic and hysterical—and its equal-opportunity insistence that there be a white mugger for every black and Hispanic mugger was ridiculous—but it was emotionally true to the time. And it was made with such urgency that *Death Wish* remains a seminal motion-picture portrait of America in the 1970s.

John Podhoretz is movie critic for THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Brave One's portrait of present-day New York is also melodramatic, but it's emotionally false. Foster's character says, in a voice dripping with enraged irony, that "New York is the safest big city in America"—which it is—but the New York we see in *The Brave One* is as dangerous as the New York of *Death Wish*. Maybe even more dangerous than the New York of 1974.

After all, in *Death Wish*, Charles Bronson goes around the Upper West Side at night trying to lure muggers into attacking him so that he can dispatch them with ruthless finality. He has to seek out the bad guys. Not Jodie Foster. In *The Brave One*, she is an entirely coincidental witness to and participant in five major violent crimes in the space of a few weeks. She just happens to be in a bodega when a man comes in and shoots his wife dead. She just happens to be walking down a dark street when a man solicits her for sex and turns out to have a doped-up girl in his backseat whom he kidnapped from Las Vegas six days earlier.

The safest big city in America? The New York of *The Brave One* wouldn't even be the safest big city in Colombia. And that's as preposterous as the fact that there seem to be only two cops in New York (Howard and the very amusing Nicky Katt) investigating every single crime in every single borough.

But these implausibilities and falsehoods wouldn't really matter except for one primary flaw. *The Brave One* fails, and fails abjectly, because it's a movie about a vigilante made by people who are repelled by the very notion of vigilantism. Jodie Foster isn't an avenging angel, righting wrongs; she's someone who's been driven to psychopathology by her traumatic experience. There's even a ludicrous moment when she comes home after a killing, jumps in the shower with her clothes on, and proceeds to soap up her shirt sleeve. I don't think this is something a righteous vigilante would do. Actually, I don't think it's something anybody but Otis the Town Drunk would do.

Foster does nothing but shake and tremble and cry and moan and suffer during and after the scenes in which she pops the evildoers. You'd think she was voluntarily agreeing to a root canal without anesthetic, not blowing bad guys away with a 9-millimeter pistol. Oddly enough, there's another recent Hollywood release about a vigilante called *Death Sentence*, this one starring Kevin Bacon, that does exactly the same thing. Bacon's character goes out, kills the guys who murdered his teenage son, and then comes home and gets in a shower and and trembles as though he has just been asked to give a donation to the Republican National Committee.

Jodie Foster

WARNER BROS. ENTERTAINMENT INC.

The Brave One *fails, and fails abjectly, because it's a movie about a vigilante made by people who are repelled by the very notion of vigilantism.*

The Brave One and *Death Sentence* are revenge fantasies that want to punish their audiences for seeking the wish fulfillment of a revenge fantasy. That's just perverse. After all, nobody is out there clamoring for vigilante movies, just as nobody is clamoring for vigilantes. Hollywood clearly decided it was time to trot out the genre again, and it's not the audience's fault that it hired people who are so stunted by political correctness that they can't even imagine why someone might believe he was acting nobly by taking the law into his own hands.

The audience punishers have trapped themselves, because their audiences are punishing them right back by laughing at the movies they've made. Guffaws and cackles broke out at a critics' screening of *The Brave One* and at a multiplex viewing of *Death Sentence* during the climactic moments of each film. (Caution: spoilers ahead.) In *The Brave One*, the police detective who has been the voice of reason suddenly demands that Jodie Foster shoot the bad guy who killed her boyfriend with his police revolver so she can get away.

At the climax of *Death Sentence*, Bacon looks at the man who killed his wife and, with a kind look on his face and a friendly tone in his voice, says, "Ready?"

Ready? What are they going to do, play a rubber match to see who gets to be the club racquetball champ? ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THOMPSON FOR PRESIDENT
2008 Arthur Branch Ave.
Hollywood, CA 90069
877-FRED08 • fred08.com

September 14, 2007

To: National Media
From: Todd Harris, Communications Director
Re: Primary Debate Calendar and Previous Sen. Thompson Commitments

Now that Sen. Thompson is an announced candidate for President, there has been some thought that he would participate in the full slate of forthcoming Republican debates. Unfortunately, Sen. Thompson has many previous commitments which have created some difficult and unavoidable scheduling conflicts. As a result of these commitments, we regret to announce that Sen. Thompson will be unable to participate in the following debates.

September 17, 2007: Fort Lauderdale, Florida: Value Voters Debate
Conflict: *The Late Show with David Letterman.*

September 27, 2007: Baltimore, Maryland: PBS Debate
Conflict: Taping hour-long *Charlie Rose Show* interview. (Note: also on PBS, so no disrespect to the brie and chablis crowd!)

October 14, 2007: Manchester, New Hampshire: WMUR-TV debate
Conflict: Coin-flipper for *NBC Sunday Night Football.*

October 21, 2007: Orlando, Florida: Florida GOP and Fox News Channel Debate
Conflict: Live guest-starring role as self on *Desperate Housewives*.

November 6, 2007: Ames, Iowa: MSNBC debate
Conflict: *Live with Regis and Kelly* taping.

November 28, 2007: St. Petersburg, Florida: CNN/YouTube/Google debate
Conflict: Ask Fred online chat on Yahoo.

January 5, 2008: Johnston, Iowa: *Des Moines Register* and Iowa Public TV Debate
Conflict: Weeklong replacement for Judge Judy.

January 30, 2008: Los Angeles, California: *LA Times* and CNN Debate
Conflict: Fred and Jeri competing on *So You Think You Can Dance*, Celebrity Edition.

Though this does mean Sen. Thompson will not participate in any of the scheduled debates, no one should interpret this as signifying that Sen. Thompson has anything but the highest respect for the debate sponsors and his fellow candidates. Suckers!!!

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED